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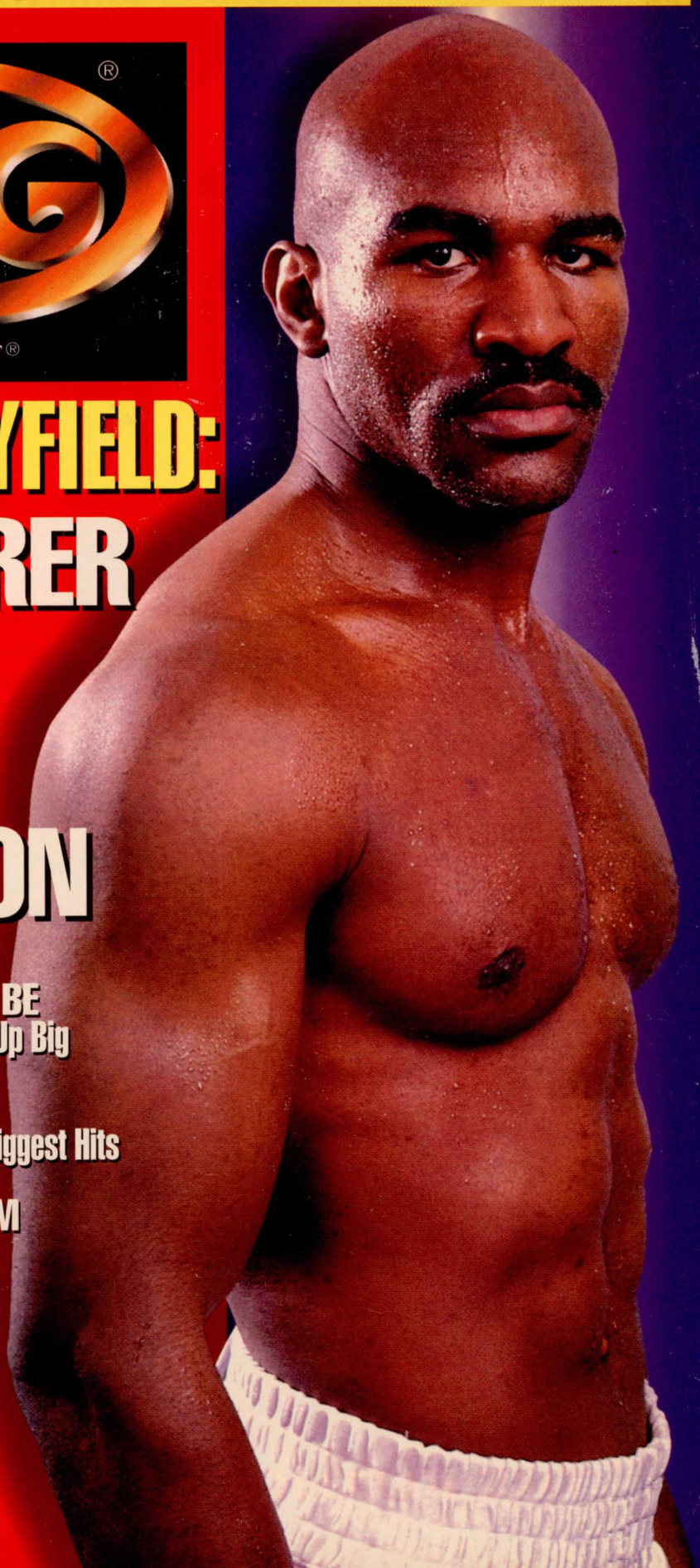

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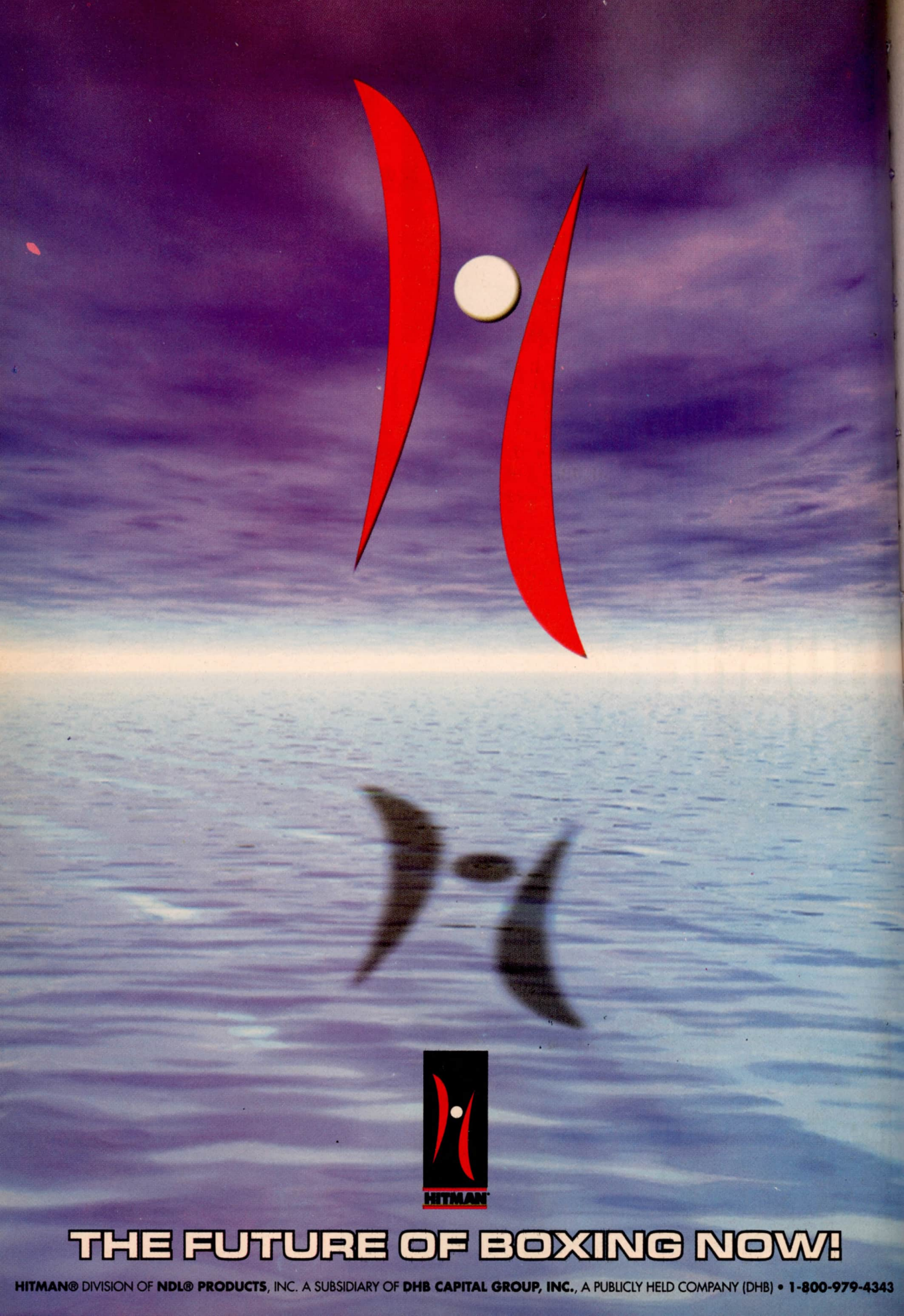

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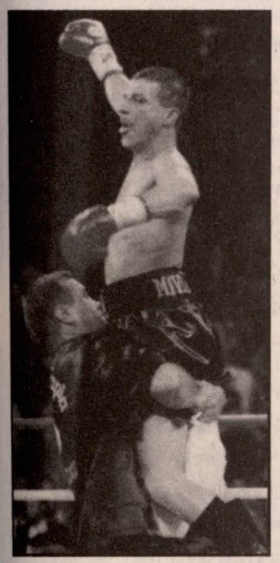

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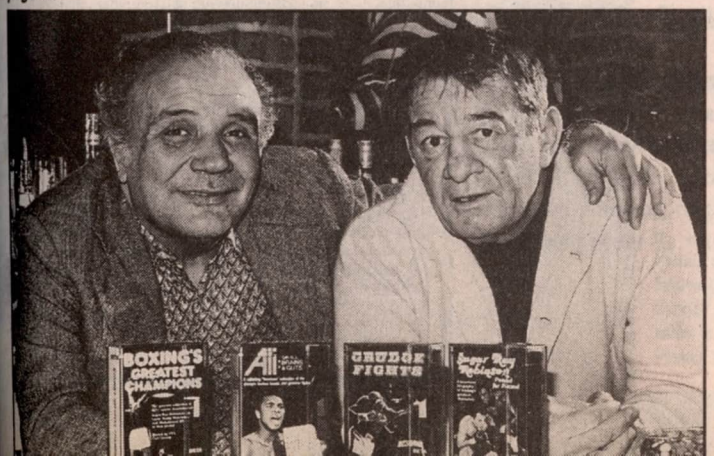

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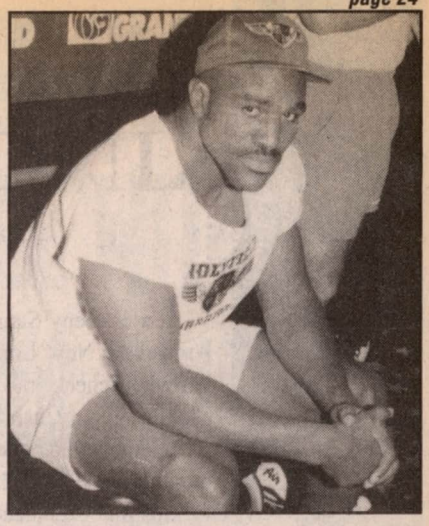

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RINGSIDE

It's a sleepy Saturday morning in August, and I'm riding Amtrak to New London, Connecticut, where I'll cab it to Norwich, check into the Ramada Inn, and then cab it to the Mohegan Sun Casino in Uncasville for the Phillip Holiday-Shane Mosley lightweight title fight. (Look for coverage in next month's issue.) All the travel is worth it because I'm pumped for this one, so much so that I chose to attend Holiday-Mosley over the Roy Jones-Montell Griffin rematch, to be fought in six days at Foxwoods. I've seen "Sugar Shane" a couple of times on television, beating up on some stiffs. But I've heard about him for years, and if he's half as good as the West Coast wise guys make him out to be, tonight could be well worth the train ride.

Even after 19 years of struggling to get to fights (I don't drive, and not just because I want to be like Jack Fiske and Michael Katz), the thought of catching a future star's breakthrough bout still excites me. And that's not all that gets this sorry scribe's keyboard humming, which means, I suppose, that I'm not as jaded as I pretend to be. There are plenty of other things, too, none of which includes watching one heavyweight bite off another's ear, as convenient a cocktail party conversation piece as that will always be.

A couple of recent examples:

Watching an old pro finally get a payoff: A few days ago, I saw Bert Cooper destroy an undefeated prospect from New York City, Richie Melito, in one round. Beforehand, there was an umbrella alert at ringside; Cooper, the rumor had it, was going in the tank. So much for rumors.

After the show, I was standing outside Madison Square Garden when Cooper walked by. He held his newly won WBF belt over his shoulder. "Finally a world champ," Cooper said with a wide smile. For a change, Smokin' Bert was on the right kind of high. You think I was gonna spoil the moment by telling him what a joke of an organization the WBF was? Not a chance. I smiled back and yelled, "Way to go, Bert!"

Anticipating the rarest of rarities, a title fight matchup of great, or at least very good, fighters, both of whom are in their primes: I was on vacation when Johnny Tapia and Danny Romero squared off in Las Vegas. I heard the result on *SportsCenter* (they saved it for the last 30 seconds of a one-hour show), but didn't get to see the fight until four days later. Watching a tape, I found myself getting butterflies during HBO's prefight interviews, the ringwalks, and referee Mitch Halpern's final instructions. How strange is that? Actually, you probably don't find it strange at all. Even after the fact, Tapia-Romero was the kind of fight real fans live for. Something tells me that if I watch the tape again, the butterflies will be back.

The thought that there'll soon be one heavyweight champion again: I know the alphabet boobies won't allow it to last for long, but I really believe WBA king Evander Holyfield, who is going to clash with IBF king Michael Moorer, and WBC boss Lennox Lewis, who is set to defend against Andrew Golota, will unifiy the title.

Let me tell you: The mere thought of a single heavyweight champion made this three-hour train ride zoom by. Okay, okay, the *Playboy* with all those pictures of Jenny McCarthy and Pamela Lee helped a little, too.

Steve Farhood
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 76, No. 12 December 1997

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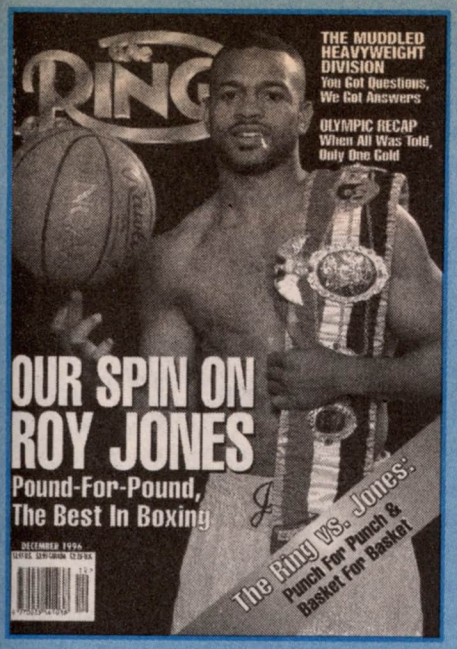

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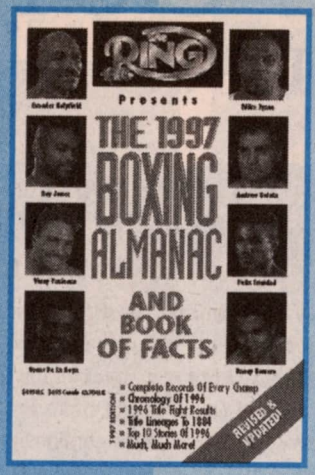

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We welcome your letters, which may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

DON'T SUPPORT THOSE WHO CHEAPEN OUR SPORT

By Nick Karabots

Since October 1992, when I purchased the company that publishes this magazine, I have resisted the temptation to express my boxing-related views on the pages of this publication. As a boxing fan since the 1940s, I have seen many memorable fights, both in the streets of the South Bronx and in the professional arena. I am emphatic when I state that street fights have no place in professional boxing, irrespective of what some might consider shock or entertainment value. We fans can no longer sit silently by. We must convey our distaste for boxers who take cheap shots and help disenfranchise those who support and encourage such acts.

Fast-forward to the evening of June 28, 1997. After watching one of the worst—if not the worst—displays of athletic professionalism ever exhibited in a boxing ring, I reached my breaking point. Yet, I hold the belief that as much as Mike Tyson might have temporarily hurt the image of professional boxing, Evander Holyfield exemplified the best tradition of the sport. I believe that Evander's performance will prevail.

It pains me, however, to think that Mike Tyson was rewarded with a one-year vacation, $27-million, and perhaps his biggest payday ever if he fights again. Prior to his incarceration, fight fans flocked to see Tyson because of his ability to knock people out. Now, some of these same fans want to watch him get knocked out. Either way, some people, and I am not one of them, will pay to see him fight again.

Many state that the sad reality of the situation is that if Tyson kept his mouth shut and had gone on to lose the fight with dignity, his earning power probably would have decreased. Tyson's moniker as "the baddest man on the planet" would have been forever tarnished and he would have been reduced to another heavyweight contender. But by getting DQ'd as he did, he may have actually enhanced his earning power. And if this is true, if Tyson stands to make more money after his grotesque act, what is the message we are sending to our children, to other athletes, and to consumers who forked over 50 hard-earned dollars to watch the fight?

The position of this magazine, and many with whom I have spoken, is that Mr. Tyson needs to straighten out his personal and professional life. I believe that the sport of boxing is resilient and will survive this latest fiasco. However, I also believe that fans will ultimately stay away in droves should boxing continue to mock our sensibilities.

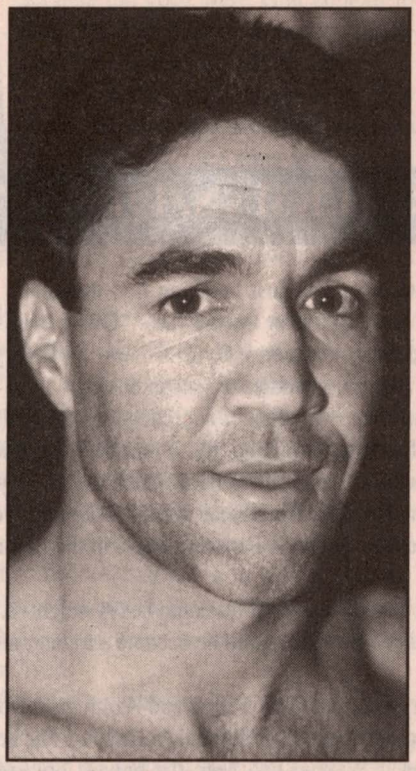
How refreshing it was to watch Classic Sports Network's broadcast of THE RING magazine's 75th Anniversary Awards. For those of you who missed this show, it was the greatest single assemblage of past and current champions in the history of the sport. During this awards show we were treated to film clips of bouts dating from the 1920s to the present, where the professionalism of the sport reflected itself in all areas. This is the sport we fans crave.

In contrast to Mr. Tyson's modus operandi, while the media and fight fans alike have been obsessed over how long Tyson will be out of action, Evander Holyfield has been showing the world how a class act is supposed to deal with adversity. Certainly, more emphasis should be placed on the way Holyfield handles himself, both in and out of the ring.

Hopefully, the next time a boxer comes along with a history of fouling in the ring, we will avoid rewarding him by not attending the fight or calling our cable company. Instead, we should pledge additional support to The Golden Gloves of America amateur boxing program or make a donation to one of the many inner-city programs helping kids better themselves through various boxing programs. In my case, I know I will put my money to better use in this manner rather than making cheap-shot boxers richer.

IN DEFENSE OF TYSON

I think people should get off Mike Tyson's back. Sure, Tyson is a personal friend of mine, but I believe he's being used as a scapegoat. Why didn't the Nevada State Athletic Commission look at why Tyson was allowed to bite Holyfield *twice?* The reason was that Mills Lane allowed him to. Biting is not in the rules, and Tyson should have been disqualified after the first incident.



A friend of Tyson, former triple-crown champion Jeff Fenech wrote THE RING in defense of the disgraced heavyweight. "What about all the marvelous moments he's brought to the sport?" Fenech asks rhetorically.

People are now harping on all the bad things about Tyson. What about all the marvelous moments he's brought to the sport, the excitement he's generated over the years? It's easy to kick a man when he's down. Mike must face up to what he's done, but imagine how bad he's feeling right at this moment.

I believe the biggest problem isn't Mike Tyson. In fact, far from it. I know from first-hand experience (my first fight with Azumah Nelson) that the biggest problem boxing faces is the incompetent people who are allowed to referee and judge our sport. It's killing it, taking away credibility and making it a laughingstock.

If this incompetence wasn't so rife, I'm sure fighters wouldn't need to stoop to the sort of actions we all witnessed a few months back.

JEFF FENECH
Sydney, Australia

[Editor's note: Jeff Fenech is a three-division former world champion.]

HEAVYWEIGHT TROUBLE

What's wrong with the heavyweight division? I'll tell you in two words: Don King. King is killing the sport that I love so much. In the last year he's promoted three heavyweights who have gotten disqualified in title fights, Oliver McCall, Mike Tyson, and Henry Akinwande. McCall landed one lucky punch against Lennox Lewis. Tyson was always overrated. And Akinwande wasn't ready for Lewis or any other top heavyweight.

As for King, get him outta here before something else happens. King has too much control. Let's refocus on the fighters, and not the money. There are plenty of good heavyweights coming up,

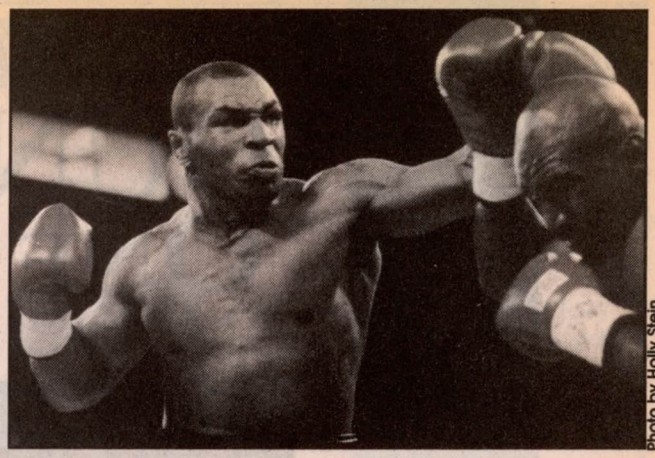


Photo by Holly Stein

Mike Tyson's conduct during his rematch with Evander Holyfield infuriated some observers and disgusted others. As a result of twice biting Holyfield, Tyson had his license revoked by the Nevada State Athletic Commission. He can re-apply to get it back in one year.

fighters like Shannon Briggs, David Tua, Kirk Johnson, Chris Byrd, Lou Savarese, and Obed Sullivan. And none of them fights for King!

CARL R. PERRY
Bryan, TX

[Editor's note: Lewis-McCall II was officially recorded as a TKO.]

THE BEST PUNCHERS

Regarding Mike Silver's article on the 10 best punchers of all-time (September 1997): Given his criteria, his picks made sense. In fact, I agreed with most of them. But I don't see how Sonny Liston and Earnie Shavers were left off. Muhammad Ali said Shavers was the hardest puncher he ever faced, and referee Mills Lane said Shavers was the hardest puncher he ever saw. Given Silver's criteria, I suppose it's not accurate to place Shavers in the same class as a Sugar Ray Robinson or an Archie Moore.

Two other heavyweights who belonged in the same category as Shavers: Cleveland Williams and Lamar Clark.

TOM PAVOTT
Quaker Hill, CT ■

Muhammad Ali learned first-hand about the incredible punching power of Earnie Shavers. Shavers was among the hardest punchers of all-time, but does he belong on a list of the 10 best punchers?

ROUND ONE

AL BRAVERMAN, 1919-1997

For a 21-year-old boxing writer who was just breaking into the game, a conversation with Al Braverman was like a splash of ice-cold water on the face. "Don't ever call me buddy or pal," Braverman told me at the now-defunct Gramercy Gym in New York City. "Call me Al or 'The General,' but never buddy or pal. I have no buddies or pals in boxing."

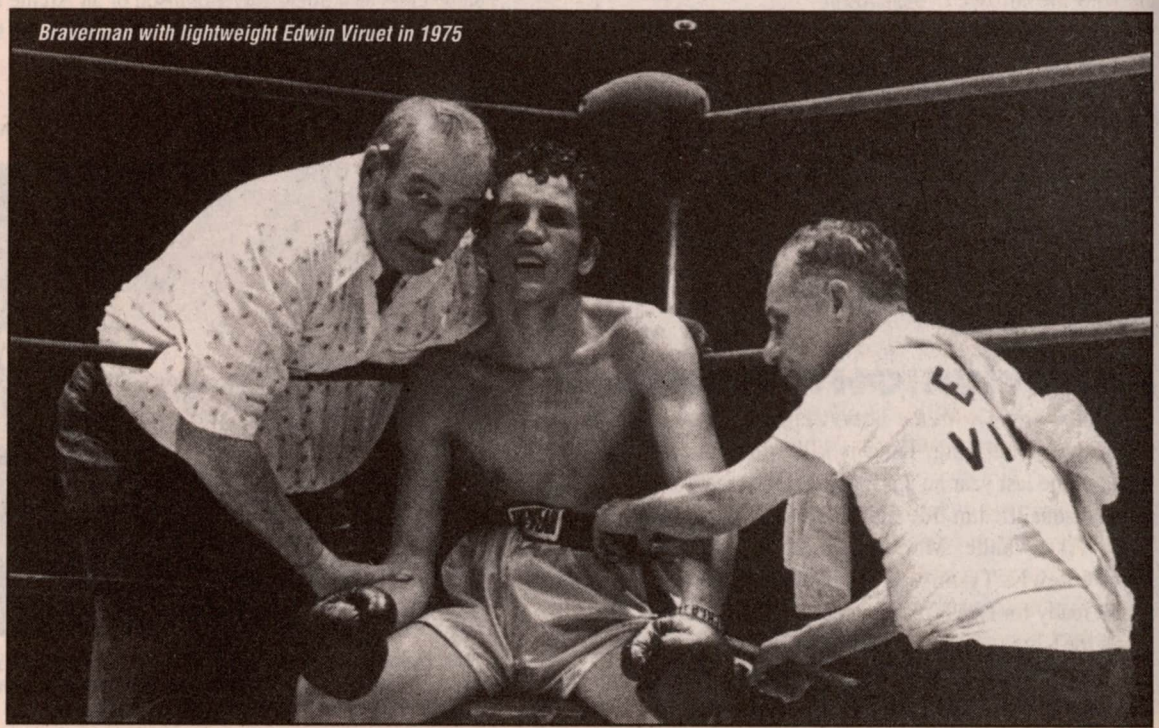
Maybe that was true, but Braverman, who died of complications from diabetes in Yonkers, New York, on July 5, was certainly a friend to Don King, for whom he worked as director of boxing for 22 years. Braverman defended his boss against all comers, which means he yelled and swore a lot. If you were looking for just another nice guy, Braverman would disappoint you. But if you wanted a Runyonesque character who loved boxing and knew every angle in the ring and out, Braverman was an education.

From 1938 to '41, Braverman went 8-0 as a professional heavyweight. A leg injury suffered during active duty in World War II ended his career, and he became a trainer, and ultimately, a manager and promoter.

The General worked with everyone from Carlos Ortiz and Azumah Nelson to Chuck Wepner and Mustafa Hamsho. In 1970, Wepner needed 75 stitches following his bout with Sonny Liston. Afterward, someone asked Liston if Wepner had been the bravest opponent of his career. "No," Liston deadpanned, "but his manager is."

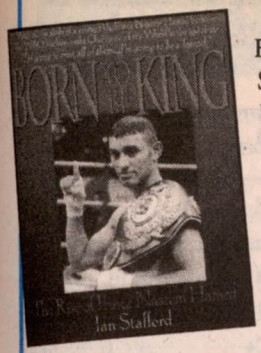
A better epitaph was never written.

–Steve Farhood



Braverman with lightweight Edwin Viruet in 1975

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF



Had former heavyweight champion Frank Bruno been born in the United States, few would have heard of him. But because the gods were kind enough to bless him with British nationality, Bruno became a wealthy hero in the UK.

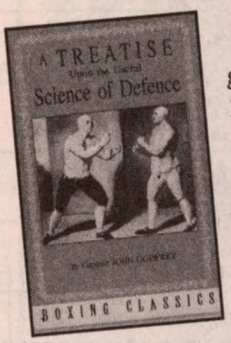
The British zeal for their few and proud is often laughable, but this time justifiable with the emergence of the flamboyant, undefeated featherweight champion Prince Naseem Hamed, whose showmanship is quickly gaining the attention of skeptical American fans.

The British faith in Hamed is biblical in scope, and nowhere is it more evident than in the text of *Born To Be King: The Rise Of Prince Naseem Hamed* (96 pages softcover, Thunder Mouth's Press, $16.95). Ian Stafford penned this full-color, oversized paperback valentine to Hamed long before the flashy featherweight won the IBF title by knocking out Tom Johnson. He writes about Hamed's career and abilities in the hushed tones usually reserved for Jesus Christ or Tiger Woods. After reading Stafford, one is led to believe that the flashy 126-pound Hamed is not only expected to unify the featherweight title, but will go down in boxing lore as one of the greatest who ever lived.

Ambitious stuff for a fighter who has been floored by inferior opponents like Daniel Alicea and has not yet faced the likes of champions such as Luisito Espinosa, Wilfredo Vazquez, or Junior Jones. But like the Hector Camacho of the early-'80s, Hamed's unorthodox skills and presence are swaying even the most jaded critics with every victory he ends by stunning knockout.

Stafford's book, like other books about Hamed, is essentially no more than a heavily illustrated, noncritical fan tribute. But it is a fun, well-written, and sharply illustrated fan tribute, a rags-to-riches yearbook that might be right on time if Hamed unifies the featherweight title and remains undefeated in years to come.

–Roberto Santiago



It's rare that a 250-year-old book gets a fresh review, but in the case of *A Treatise Upon The Science Of Defense*, by Captain John Godfrey, a new look is certainly justified. When Godfrey, a prominent British soldier, published what is widely considered the first-ever boxing book in 1747, it was an immediate commercial success. However, until Milo Books published a paperback edition of *Treatise* this year, it had been unavailable to the general public for well over 200 years.

Most of Godfrey's 66-page book deals with the basic principles for combat with two common weapons of the day, the small- and back-sword. But it's the book's 21-page section on boxing upon which its reputation rests.

Godfrey gives technical advice and also analyzes the leading prize fighters of the era. The author's style is antiquated, but that's half the charm of this unique volume. While probably of little interest to the casual boxing fan, this seminal work will delight all serious historians. An added bonus is publisher Peter Walsh's introduction, which also serves as an excellent essay on the roots of boxing.

Treatise is available by mail order ($12.95 plus $4 postage) from Milo Books, P.O. Box 153, Bury, BL0 9FX, United Kingdom.

–Nigel Collins

AN EAR FOR AN EAR

According to the New York *Daily News*, a New York City commodities broker came home from Las Vegas with the piece of Evander Holyfield's right ear that was bitten off by Mike Tyson.

"I brought the ear back in a Coleman cooler packed with ice," said Pete Stevens. "I kept it on my lap the whole flight."

Stevens claimed to have paid an MGM Grand security guard between $18,000 and $30,000 for the cartilage in question.

"I was kind of in disbelief when the guy first showed it to me," Stevens told the newspaper. "But the guard showed me his credentials, and photos of himself in the ring that night. I had my friend who's a surgeon look at it. We compared it with a photo of Holyfield's wound. My buddy said, 'That's the real McCoy.'"

Stevens is not to be confused with Pete Stephens, a man from Atlanta who is hawking some bloody gauze from Holyfield-Tyson II. We felt it was our journalistic duty to make that distinction clear.

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
7-5-97	Michael Nunn KO 1 Lonnie Horn	Fox Sports	lh	C+	C-	D
Ugly! Waiting for title shot, Nunn beats up on 40-year-old						
7-5-97	**Raul Marquez KO 4 Romallis Ellis**	**ABC**	**IBF jm**	**A-**	**B**	**C+**
Ellis ain't no junior middle; Marquez a work in progress						
7-12-97	Kirk Johnson KO 7 Louis Monaco	CBS	h	C+	C	C
A sub for Samson Po'uha, ouclassed Monaco had lost just 10 days before						
7-12-97	Eric Morel KO 2 Mauro Diaz	CBS	jb	C	B-	C-
Powerpunching 1996 Olympian Morel takes out 49-fight veteran						
7-12-97	Floyd Mayweather Jr. KO 4 Jesus Chavez	CBS	jl	C	C+	C
"Joy Boy" already ready for fringe contenders						
7-12-97	Kevin Kelley KO 10 Orlando Fernandez	ABC	f	B	B-	B
Always plucky Fernandez competitive until one-punch kayo						
7-12-97	**Lennox Lewis W Disq. 5 Henry Akinwande**	**HBO**	**WBC h**	**A**	**B+**	**F**
Are the heavys jinxed? Elongated Englishman makes like an octopus						
7-13-97	Buster Douglas KO 4 Quinn Navarre	CBS	h	B	C	C+
Not bad while it lasts; Douglas in line for title shot?						
7-13-97	Fred Norwood W 10 Daryl Pinckney	CBS	jf	B-	B-	C
Pretty much a one-sided beating; "Li'l Hagler" making a big impression						
7-13-97	Tony Marshall KO 10 Kevin Tillman	ESPN2	jm	C-	C	C-
Predictable; as usual, Tillman doesn't throw enough punches						
7-14-97	Juan Manuel Marquez KO 7 Catalino Becerra	Prime	f	C+	C	B-
Even a reluctant southpaw can't stop Marquez' run to title						
7-15-97	Hasim Rahman KO 9 Jeff Wooden	USA	USBA h	C+	B-	A-
Rahman's power saves him in exciting, albeit sloppy, brawl						
7-18-97	**Johnny Tapia W 12 Danny Romero**	**HBO**	**IBF jb**	**A**	**A+**	**B+**
Hardly a slugfest, but highly entertaining nonetheless						
7-18-97	Baby Jake Matlala KO 9 Michael Carbajal	HBO	WBO jfl	B+	A-	A-
Work, work, work! The world's shortest fighter has one of the biggest hearts						
7-19-97	**Frankie Liles W 12 Zafarou Ballogou**	**Show**	**WBA sm**	**A-**	**B**	**B-**
Strong but sloppy challenger takes Liles' best shots						
7-19-97	**Tim Austin KO 8 Mbulelo Botile**	**Show**	**IBF b**	**A-**	**A-**	**B+**
Powerful southpaw surprises established champ in a good one						
7-19-97	**William Guthrie KO 3 Darrin Allen**	**Fox Sports**	**Vacant IBF lh**	**B+**	**B**	**D**
Blowout from start; Guthrie never lets him breathe						
7-19-97	Naseem Hamed KO 2 Juan Gerardo Cabrera	ABC	f	A-	B-	C
Nothing more than a showcase for the powerpunching Prince						
7-20-97	**Bernard Hopkins KO 11 Glen Johnson**	**CBS**	**IBF m**	**A**	**B**	**C-**
Johnson proves tough, but outclassed and far too defensive-minded						
7-20-97	Aaron Davis KO 1 Tommy Small	ESPN2	Vacant USBA jm	C	D	F
Stinker! Four of Small's last five losses have come by kayo						
7-25-97	Orlando Canizales W 12 Edwin Santana	ESPN	f	B-	B	B-
Canizales never at his best vs. movers						
7-27-97	Otis Grant KO 6 Danny Garcia	ESPN2	NABF m	C	C-	F
Garcia never tries, covering up until surrendering						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

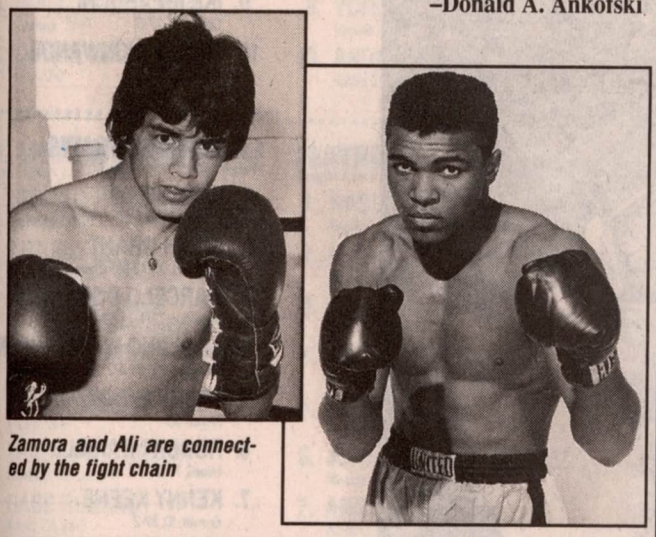
Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime

HOW ALFONSO ZAMORA BEAT MUHAMMAD ALI

Zamora, a bantamweight, kayoed Eusebio Pedroza, who outpointed Rocky Lockridge, who knocked out Roger Mayweather, who decisioned Vinny Pazienza, who topped Greg Haugen, who edged Hector Camacho, who beat Roberto Duran, who upset Iran Barkley, who stopped Gerrie Coetzee, who crushed Michael Dokes, who halted Mike Weaver, who bested James Tillis, who defeated Earnie Shavers, who demolished Ken Norton, who outpointed Ali.

–Donald A. Ankofski



Zamora and Ali are connected by the fight chain

OUTSIDE THE ROPES

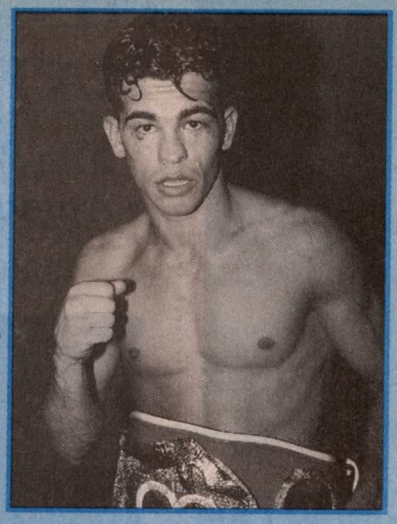


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Gatti: Disorderly conduct

After leading authorities on a chase in Union City, New Jersey, IBF junior lightweight champion **Arturo Gatti** was charged with disorderly persons offenses ... Veteran trainer **Chino Govin** died in Miami at age 81. Among others, Govin worked with **Jose Napoles, Rodrigo Valdes,** and **Vilomar Fernandez** ... The town council of Bury, Greater Manchester, England, has voted to ban professional boxing. Council leader **Derek Boden** said medical evidence that boxing produces permanent brain damage swayed the vote.

THE PUNCHLINES

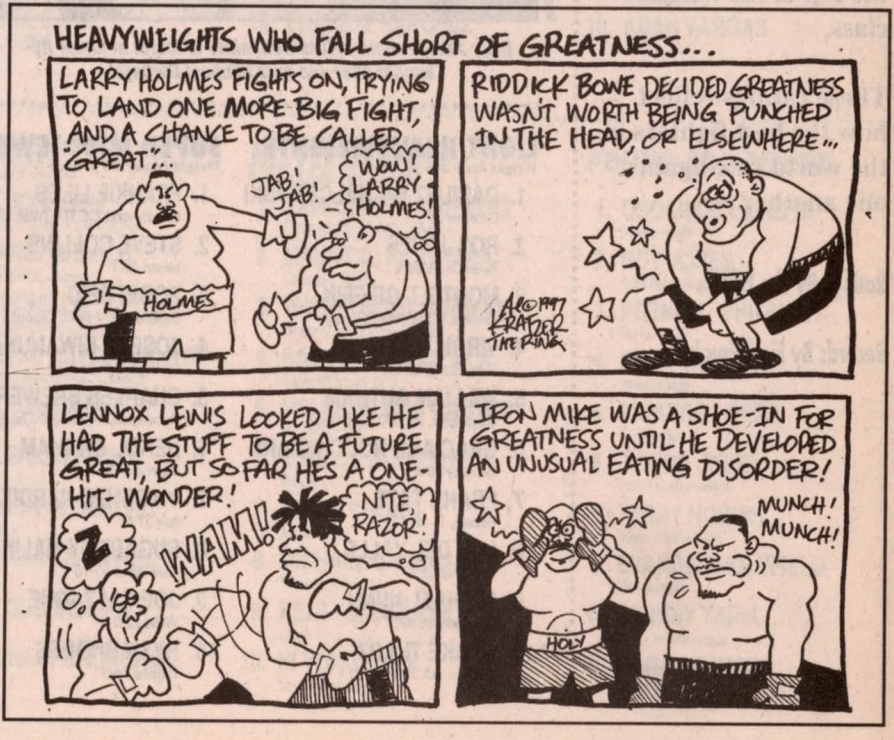
"They call him DK. They ought to call him DQ."

–HBO's Larry Merchant on Don King, who promoted Evander Holyfield's disqualification win over Mike Tyson and Lennox Lewis' DQ win over Henry Akinwande.

"A lot of people say, 'This is disgusting!' But they buy them anyway."

–Patricia Judacheski, a clerk at Temptations, a chocolate shop in Pasadena, California, that sold all 200 samples of "Evander Holey Ear," a milk-chocolate version of Evander Holyfield's appendage.

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended August 1, 1997

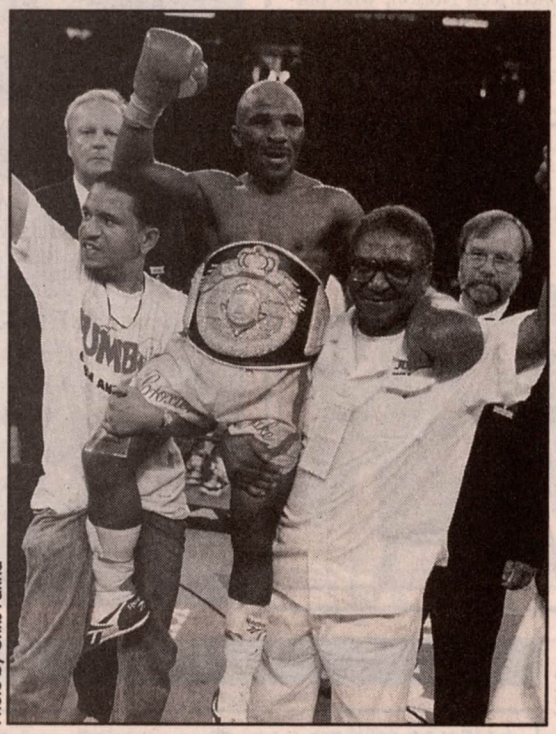


Photo by Chris Farina

Baby Jake Matlala moves from ninth to fourth at junior flyweight after win over Michael Carbajal.

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** Fairburn, GA *34-3 (WBA Champ)*
2. **LENNOX LEWIS** England *31-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **MICHAEL MOORER** Detroit, MI *38-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **ANDREW GOLOTA** Chicago, IL *28-2*
5. **RAY MERCER** West Orange, NJ *24-4-1*
6. **DAVID TUA** Totowa, NJ *27-1*
7. **TIM WITHERSPOON** Philadelphia, PA *45-5*
8. **GEORGE FOREMAN** Marshall, TX *76-4*
9. **IKE IBEABUCHI** Dallas, TX *17-0*
10. **HENRY AKINWANDE** England *31-1-1*

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **NATE MILLER** Philadelphia, PA *29-4 (WBA Champ)*
2. **URIAH GRANT** Miami, FL *26-12 (IBF Champ)*
3. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ** Argentina *21-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **ADOLPHO WASHINGTON** Lexington, KY *26-4-2*
5. **FABRICE TIOZZO** France *36-1*
6. **ROBERT DANIELS** Miami, FL *36-3-1*
7. **KENNY KEENE** Emmett, ID *39-2*
8. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ** Germany *20-0*
9. **TORSTEN MAY** Germany *16-1*
10. **JAMES TONEY** Ann Arbor, MI *56-4-2*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** Germany *34-0*
2. **ROY JONES** Pensacola, FL *34-1*
3. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** Chicago, IL *27-0 (WBC Champ)*
4. **VIRGIL HILL** Bismarck, ND *43-2*
5. **WILLIAM GUTHRIE** Philadelphia, PA *24-0 (IBF Champ)*
6. **GRACIANO ROCCHIGIANI** Germany *38-4-1*
7. **FRANK TATE** Houston, TX *38-4*
8. **LOU DEL VALLE** Bronx, NY *25-1*
9. **MICHAEL NUNN** Davenport, IA *52-3*
10. **DRAKE THADZI** Brockton, MA *29-8-1*

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **FRANKIE LILES** N. Hollywood, CA *31-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **STEVE COLLINS** Ireland *36-3*
3. **ROBIN REID** England *23-0-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **JOSEPH KIWANUKA** Las Vegas, NV *24-1-2*
5. **CHARLES BREWER** Philadelphia, PA *28-5 (IBF Champ)*
6. **HEROL GRAHAM** England *47-5*
7. **VINCENZO NARDIELLO** Italy *31-6*
8. **SUGARBOY MALINGA** South Africa *41-10*
9. **JOE CALZAGHE** Wales *22-0*
10. **RYAN RHODES** England *14-0*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS** Philadelphia, PA *32-2-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **KEITH HOLMES** Washington, D.C. *29-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **WILLIAM JOPPY** Washington, D.C. *24-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **LONNIE BRADLEY** New York, NY *26-0-1*
5. **DANA ROSENBLATT** Malden, MA *29-1*
6. **OTIS GRANT** Canada *29-1-1*
7. **ROBERT McCRACKEN** England *28-0*
8. **BRIAN BARBOSA** Providence, RI *23-3*
9. **HASSINE CHERIFI** France *24-1-1*
10. **PAUL VADEN** San Diego, CA *27-1*

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Mission Valley, CA *45-6 (WBC Champ)*
2. **LAURENT BOUDOUANI**
   France *35-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **JULIO CESAR VASQUEZ**
   Argentina *58-3*
4. **WINKY WRIGHT**
   St. Petersburg, FL *37-1*
5. **RAUL MARQUEZ**
   Houston, TX *27-0 (IBF Champ)*
6. **BRONCO McKART**
   Monroe, MI *32-2*
7. **HECTOR CAMACHO**
   Orlando, FL *64-3*
8. **EMMETT LINTON**
   Tacoma, WA *23-2*
9. **GUILLERMO JONES**
   Panama *21-0*
10. **DAVIDE CIARLANTE**
    Italy *22-0*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *25-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Norfolk, VA *40-2-1*
3. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Puerto Rico *31-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **IKE QUARTEY**
   Ghana *34-0 (WBA Champ)*
5. **JOSE LUIS LOPEZ**
   Mexico *39-3-1*
6. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *39-2*
7. **PATRICK CHARPENTIER**
   France *25-4*
8. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *24-2-1*
9. **YORI BOY CAMPAS**
   Mexico *68-2*
10. **ANDREI PESTRIAEV**
    Russia *20-1*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **VINCE PHILLIPS**
   Las Vegas, NV *36-3 (IBF Champ)*
2. **KHALID RAHILOU**
   France *30-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
   Mexico *99-2-1*
4. **MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ**
   Mexico *42-1*
5. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *18-1-1*
6. **RAY OLIVEIRA**
   New Bedford, MA *30-5*
7. **FRANKIE RANDALL**
   Warren, OH *53-5-1*
8. **RAFAEL RUELAS**
   Studio City, CA *49-3*
9. **CHARLES MURRAY**
   Rochester, NY *40-4*
10. **HECTOR LOPEZ**
    Palmdale, CA *36-6-1*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **PHILLIP HOLIDAY**
   South Africa *31-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **ORZUBEK NAZAROV**
   Japan *24-0 (WBA Champ)*
3. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *22-0 (WBC Champ)*
4. **GEORGE SCOTT**
   Pembroke Pines, FL *31-1*
5. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *23-0*
6. **AZUMAH NELSON**
   Ghana *39-4-2*
7. **ISRAEL CARDONA**
   Hartford, CT *26-2*
8. **JEAN-BAPTISTE MENDY**
   France *49-6-2*
9. **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
   Puerto Rico *42-4*
10. **ARTUR GRIGORJAN**
    Uzbekistan *22-0*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **GENARO HERNANDEZ**
   Los Angeles, CA *36-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ *25-1 (IBF Champ)*
3. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *23-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **ROBERT GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA *28-0*
5. **JULIEN LORCY**
   France *35-0-1*
6. **TRACY PATTERSON**
   Highland, NY *58-5-1*
7. **GABE RUELAS**
   Arleta, CA *44-3*
8. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN *21-2-1*
9. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Austin, TX *21-1*
10. **JUSTIN JUUKO**
    England *29-1-1*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED**
   England *27-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **LUISITO ESPINOSA**
   Philippines *41-7 (WBC Champ)*
3. **TOM JOHNSON**
   Detroit, MI *45-3-1*
4. **WILFREDO VAZQUEZ**
   Puerto Rico *50-7-3 (WBA Champ)*
5. **KEVIN KELLEY**
   Flushing, NY *48-1-2*
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico *21-1*
7. **ANGEL VASQUEZ**
   Hartford, CT *15-0*
8. **ORLANDO CANIZALES**
   Laredo, TX *46-3-1*
9. **EVER BELENO**
   Colombia *36-2*
10. **DERRICK GAINER**
    Pensacola, FL *19-4*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Brooklyn, NY *43-2*
2. **DANIEL ZARAGOZA**
   Mexico *55-7-3 (WBC Champ)*
3. **VUYANI BUNGU**
   South Africa *32-2 (IBF Champ)*
4. **ANTONIO CERMENO**
   Venezuela *27-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Mexico *43-2*
6. **WAYNE McCULLOUGH**
   Las Vegas, NV *20-1*
7. **KENNEDY McKINNEY**
   Memphis, TN *31-3-1*
8. **ERIK MORALES**
   Mexico *26-0*
9. **FRED NORWOOD**
   St. Louis, MO *26-0-1*
10. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
    Mexico *22-0*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **TIM AUSTIN**
   Cincinnati, OH *17-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASSUK**
   Thailand *15-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **NANA KONADU**
   Ghana *37-3 (WBA Champ)*
4. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO**
   Colombia *37-1*
5. **MBULELO BOTILE**
   South Africa *21-1*
6. **PAULIE AYALA**
   Ft. Worth, TX *20-0*
7. **VEERAPHOL SAHAPROM**
   Thailand *11-1*
8. **DAORUNG C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *59-6-1*
9. **PASTOR MAURIN**
   Argentina *34-0*
10. **ADAN VARGAS**
    Mexico *23-1*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Albuquerque, NM *40-0-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **DANNY ROMERO**
   Albuquerque, NM *30-2*
3. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *36-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *13-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **HYUNG CHUL LEE**
   South Korea *19-6*
6. **HAROLD GREY**
   Colombia *21-2*
7. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia *23-0*
8. **SATOSHI IIDA**
   Japan *22-1-1*
9. **RATANACHAI SOR VORAPIN**
   Thailand *22-3*
10. **ANDY AGOSTO**
    Puerto Rico *14-0*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. *31-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **YURI ARBACHAKOV**
   Japan *23-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JOSE BONILLA**
   Venezuela *22-3 (WBA Champ)*
4. **CHATCHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *26-1 (Interim WBC Champ)*
5. **CARLOS SALAZAR**
   Argentina *44-7-3*
6. **ARTHUR JOHNSON**
   East St. Louis, IL *15-3*
7. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *26-1*
8. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *33-3*
9. **DAVID GUERAULT**
   France *5-0*
10. **CHOKVIWAT CHOKCHAI**
    Thailand *34-2*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand *35-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **MAURICIO PASTRANA**
   Colombia *16-0*
3. **PHICHITNOI C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *18-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **BABY JAKE MATLALA**
   South Africa *46-10-2*
5. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
   Mexico *49-5-4*
6. **CARLOS MURILLO**
   Panama *31-3*
7. **JESUS CHONG**
   Mexico *31-7*
8. **MICHAEL CARBAJAL**
   Phoenix, AZ *44-4*
9. **KEIJI YAMAGUCHI**
   Japan *21-2*
10. **HI YONG CHOI**
    South Korea *19-2*

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Welterweight
2. **ROY JONES**
   Light Heavyweight
3. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Welterweight
4. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Welterweight
5. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Strawweight
6. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Junior Featherweight
7. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Junior Middleweight
8. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
   Heavyweight
9. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Junior Bantamweight
10. **MARK JOHNSON**
    Flyweight

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Oct. 1983: Special Hagler-Duran Program. Plus: Best fighter poll, Jose Sulaiman, Milton McCrory, Camacho-Limon, DeLeon-Gordon, Hamsho-Benitez, who's who, Bill McNeese.

Nov. 1983: Gerrie Coetzee: The New Heavyweight Champ Sets His Sights On Holmes. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Murray Sutherland, James J. Braddock, Muhammad Ali.

Feb. 1984: Don King Talks And Talks And Talks. Plus: Leonard's return, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, 1983 quotes, Marvin Hagler, Johnny Bratton, Gerald Hayes, Hagler-Duran color.

April 1984: Sugar Ray Leonard: "I'm Gonna Be Better Than Ever!" Plus: Ratings of 8,000 fighters, Henry Armstrong, Don Lee, Koji Kobayashi, Mancini-Chacon (color).

June 1984: Bumphus, Lockridge, Duva: 'That Championship Year.' Plus: Ferdie Pacheco, Harry Arroyo, Holmes-Coetzee preview, Pipino Cuevas, Aaron Pryor, Battling Nelson-Joe Gans, Witherspoon-Page.

July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: Olympic Special: Mark Breland Leads A Strong Squad. Plus: Leonard-Howard, Davila-Sanchez, Bonecrusher-Bruno, Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Garza-Orozco.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, boxing's best, James Broad, Julian Jackson, Pinklon Thomas.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, Sonny Liston.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

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Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Truth Williams, Tyrell Biggs, Greg Richardson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Paul-Blake, Witherspoon-Bonecrusher, Berbick-Bey, Pinklon Thomas.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

Feb. 1986: Mike Tyson: The Legacy Of Cus D'Amato. Plus: Rocky IV, Curry-McCrory, Teddy Mann, Kenny Lane.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Ring's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

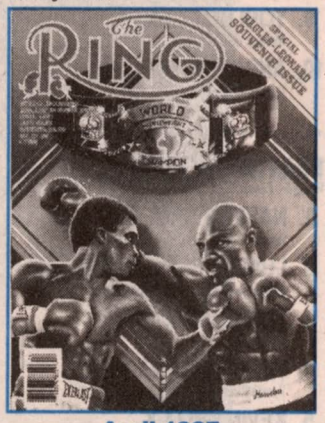
July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.



April 1987

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Rocky Lockridge & Roger Mayweather, Panama, Tony Burton, Chavez-Rosario, Gervacio-Espinoza, Vaca-Honeyghan.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler-Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Rocky Graziano—Thanks For The Memories. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Junior Jones, Mike Tyson, Chris Eubank, Wolgast-Nelson, Hall of Fame.

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

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May 1991: Ali-Frazier I: 20 Years Late, Still The Fight Of The Century (color). Plus: fighting at home, Mark McPherson, George Costner, Rolando

Pascua, Tony Canzoneri.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be...But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again-How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson's Fight For Greatness—Will November 8 Be His Moment? Plus: Edwin Rosario, Jeff Fenech, overrated/underrated, Giardello-Graham, Lennox Lewis, Marcel Cerdan, Leonard-Hearns I, heavyweight computer tournament, Ali portrait (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: Our Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Gamache, moving up in weight, Billy Conn-Michael Spinks, Joe Louis (color).

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

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July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

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Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

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April 1993: Riddick Bowe: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

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Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & Toney Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing Fast. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Rafael Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Nov. 1994: With Lewis Fighting Bowe ... Is Michael Moorer's Career Off-Target? Plus: Wayne McCullough, Hall of Fame, Alejandro Lavorante, Rocky Marciano, Paz-Duran, Injuries (part I), What If ... Pedroza vs. Sanchez.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, Injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

Feb. 1995: Return To Greatness? Mike Tyson Doesn't Know His Future ... But *The Ring* Does! Plus: Pernell Whitaker, Lennox Lewis, Mark Johnson, Orlando Canizales, Tom Johnson, Irving Cohen.

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Aug. 1995: Can Tyson Go From Great To All-Time Great? Plus: Antonio Barrera, Collins-Eubanks, Johnny Paychek, McCall-Holmes.

Sept. 1995: Bona Fide Superstar: Oscar Is The Boxer For The '90s. Plus: George Foreman, Danny Romero, Vincent Pettway, Lou Ambers, George Latka, What If ... McCallum-Hearns.

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Nov. 1995: A 6-1 Favorite vs. Any Champion: Maybe They Should Just Give Tyson The Title. Plus: Roy Jones, Riddick Bowe, Ancee Gedeon, Hall of Fame, LaMar Clark, All-Time Top 10: Italy, What If ... Saad Muhammad-Scott.

Dec. 1995: McNeeley Goes Too Soon—Mike Tyson: The Beast Is Yet To Come. Plus: Tommy Morrison, Naseem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, best chins.

Winter 1995 (92-Page Special): Buster Mathis Jr.: "Mike Tyson, You Got A Fight Comin' On." Plus: Holyfield-Bowe III preview, Wayne McCullough, Jesse James Hughes, Norris-Vaden preview, *The Ring* Insiders' Poll, What If ... Moore-Ayala Jr.

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Feb. 1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He Man Enough For Tyson? Also: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-Barrera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison Ave., What If ... Leonard-Pryor.

April 1996: Oscar De La Hoya—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Mike Tyson, Gabe Ruelas, 1995 in review, All-Time Top 10: Africa.

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June 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-Tyson II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. Plus: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, computer unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the game.

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RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

CLOTTING FACTOR

The cut over Michael Carbajal's left eye was opened by a punch, but the slash alongside his right eyebrow was the result of a Baby Jake Matlala headbutt. That the 4'10" Matlala could butt the 5'5" Carbajal anywhere above the sternum was as surprising as the South African's ninth-round TKO victory. What was even more unexpected, though, was Carbajal's postfight revelation that he might shed his status as professional prize fighter rather than shed another drop of blood in the ring.

Carbajal and his brother-trainer, Danny, concluded that the scar tissue built up in a 49-bout career and made worse by the Matlala fight would be a serious handicap in the future. And it's a risk that doesn't need to be taken by a financially secure 30-year-old whose little hands of stone can reach for that Olympic silver medal or world title belt any time he needs tangible proof of his success. Said Danny, "I don't want to see my brother bleed anymore."

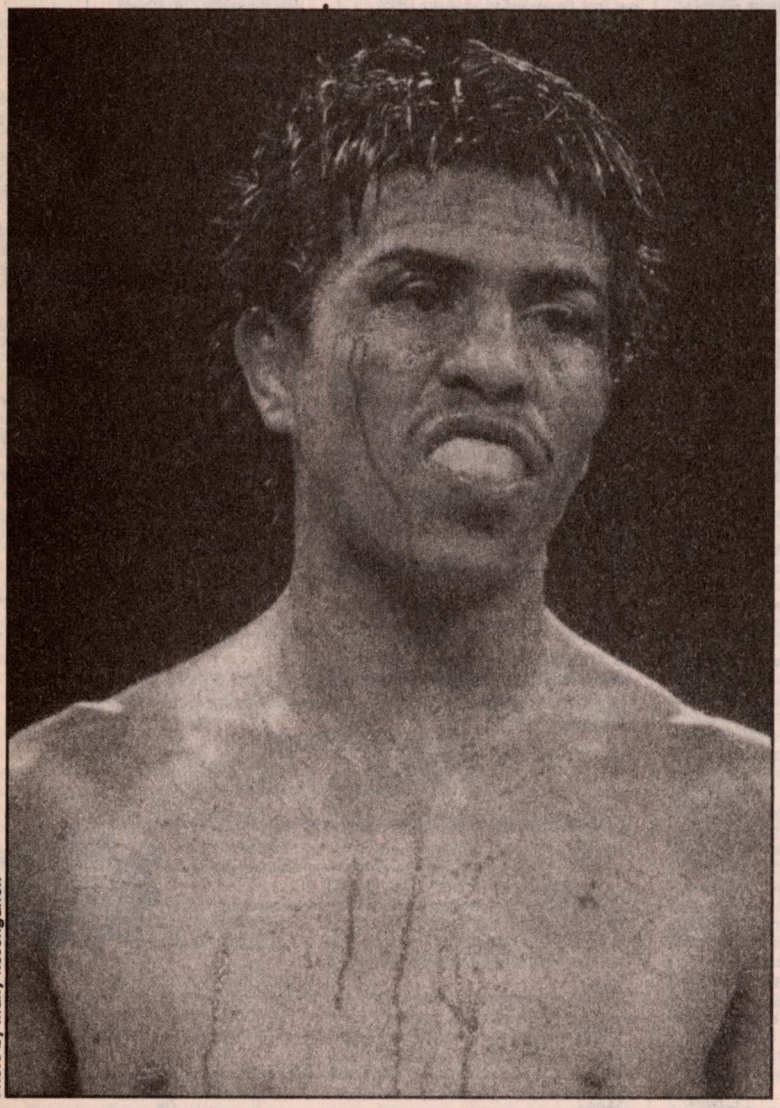


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

His eyelids torn, former junior flyweight champion Michael Carbajal succumbed to Baby Jake Matlala on the Johnny Tapia-Danny Romero undercard in Las Vegas. Will his scar tissue convince the 30-year-old Carbajal to retire?

If Danny is tired of seeing red, and Michael doesn't need the green, then riding off into the purple Phoenix sunset *is* the best move. But the possibility of a cut-induced exit by Carbajal got me thinking about how many of the unforgettable boxing moments of my life might not have occurred if a number of other slash-prone warriors had split soon after their eyebrows did. And how differently some of those tough guys might be perceived today if their blood hadn't always flowed as freely as their punches.

Now before you go calling me a ghoul, hold on. Though the sight of blood doesn't sicken me, it doesn't excite me, either. And in this age of AIDS, and with many states still not testing fighters for HIV, it's a good thing when two combatants can make it through a bout without even a nick. The undeniable fact, however, is that red has always been a most dramatic hue when splashed on a boxing canvas.

Remember Matt Franklin peering through his blood to score a rematch knockout of Marvin Johnson? Bobby Chacon sliced and diced, but overcoming Cornelius Boza-Edwards? How about Chuck Wepner's face turned into a red mask by a Sonny Liston who was fighting for the last time?

Where have you gone, Ron Stander? Is it my imagination, or have true bleeders gone the way of 15-round title fights and the Eastern Parkway Arena? There just don't seem to be too many of the epidermally challenged out there anymore. True, Daniel Zaragoza is usually cut before he even leaves his

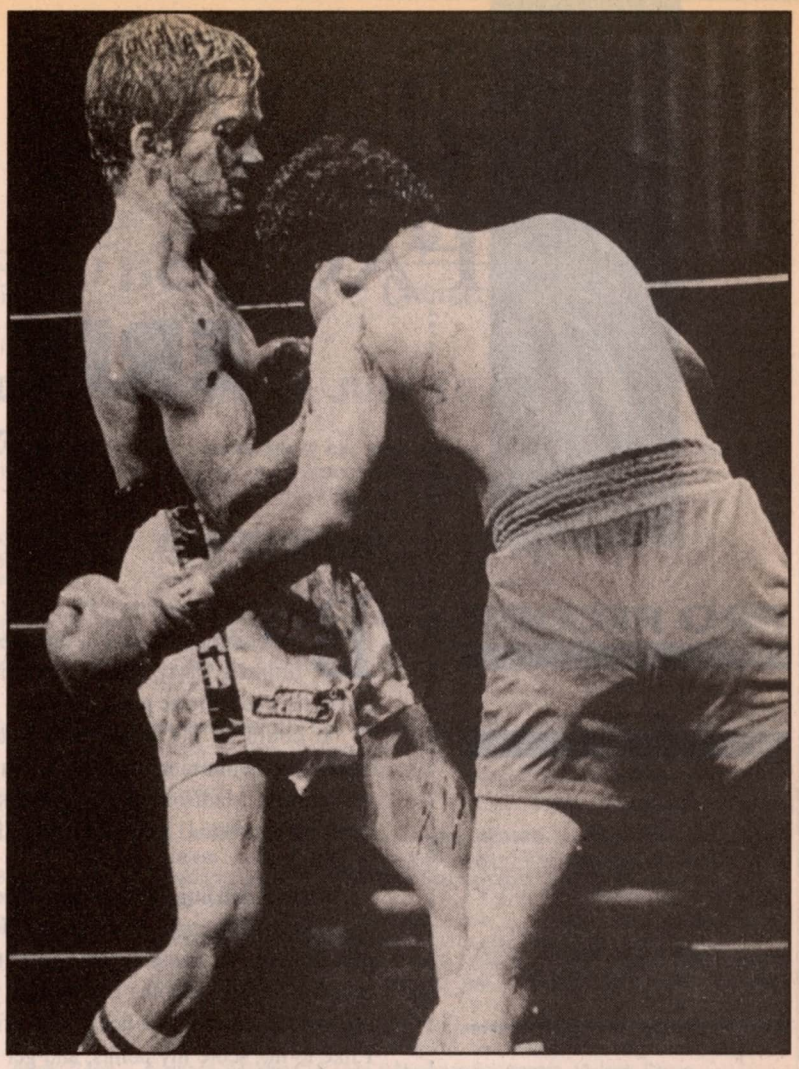
dressing room; the warpaint Vinny Pazienza decorates his face with is often replaced by plasma at some point in his battles; and an Arturo Gatti fight is one show that always guarantees as much blood as a KISS concert. But they are the exceptions.

In addition to Franklin (later Saad Muhammad), Chacon, and Wepner, those battling for the title of King Crimson in my boxing lifetime included Victor Galindez, Jerry Quarry, Lupe Pintor, Bazooka Limon, Mustafa Hamsho, Vito Antuofermo, Ray "Gush Gush" Mancini, Iran Barkley, Alan Minter, Art Frias, and, of course, Sean O (Negative)'Grady. Those guys got busted up quicker than one of Bruce Willis' parties, and their cut men were usually more exhausted at the end of their bouts than they were.

So why are there so few bleeders today? In search of the answer, my fingers dialed the number of O'Grady, a former lightweight king and current analyst on the USA Network's *Tuesday Night Fights*. When you want to talk leafy centerpieces, you seek out Martha Stewart. When you want to learn about bleeding, you call O'Grady.

"You don't often see those really gritty fights anymore, with fighters slipping in their blood and continuing on," O'Grady told me. "Referees and doctors seem to be taking better care of the fighters. They're stopping fights quicker. I saw a fight stopped on one of our telecasts when the cut was *under* the kid's eye. And cutmen are using better medicine in the corner these days. If you get cut, it doesn't bleed."

Veteran trainer and cutman Al Certo, who was once entrusted with the Herculean task of trying to patch Hamsho's shredded skin, scoffs at O'Grady's better-life-through-medicine argument.



During his 1978 battle with Shig Fukuyama, Sean O'Grady was lucky he was able to see his opponent, much less hit him. O'Grady-Fukuyama was one of the bloodiest fights ever aired on national television. O'Grady won by fifth-round kayo.

"The stuff we're allowed to use to close cuts, adrenaline, is a farce," Certo said. "It's like using nothing. Applying pressure is the only thing that cuts down on bleeding. Why aren't there as many bleeders today? Good question. I think it's because fighters aren't as good as they used to be. Guys don't get cut as much because they don't get hit as hard and sharp as they did 20 years ago. Roy Jones is supposed to be the best fighter in the world and he doesn't cut up anybody because he doesn't deliver his punches right. He's off-balance and he slaps too much."

My own theory is that the disappearance of bleeders may be the result of today's boxers being able to climb an organization's rankings, or even become champions, with few demanding tests en route.

Because they wanted to prove, not protect, themselves, the Hamshos and Barkleys jumped from one world-class foe to another, and their faces reflected that. Galindez made 12 light heavyweight defenses in two reigns, and Pintor made a total of nine defenses as a bantamweight and super bantam, thus the two men regularly subjected their mugs to the attacks of quality fighters. Today, most championship reigns don't last as long as it took Antuofermo to get stitched. The career plan seems to have become, "Rule fast, be dethroned young, and leave a good-looking corpse."

Interestingly, O'Grady has mixed emotions about having had to bleed so much for his success. He says he hates to see a fighter get cut and thinks the sport is at its best when bloodless, but admits that his favorite photo of himself is one that was taken during his 1978 TKO of Shig Fukuyama, one of the bloodiest bouts in network TV history.

"I'm wearing white trunks, and there's blood all down the side of them," O'Grady said. "And the blood around my eye is so thick that it looks like I have no eyeball. I love that picture. For me, that epitomizes everything that a fighter must do to endure."

That's the same way I feel, and why I have always had an affinity for the scarred and scarlet, the pugs whose mugs tell you they didn't make their living selling water purifiers. Regardless of the way the game has changed, the next Mustafa Hamsho just has to be out there somewhere, no? He must exist, this guy with the tissue-thin skin, prominent cheekbones, and refusal to take a backward step.

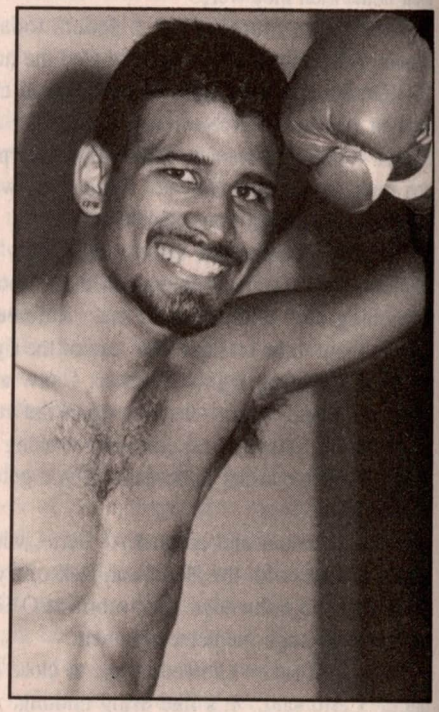
There's a void to be filled, for sure. Perhaps, in the not-too-distant suture ... ■

NEW FACES

ERIC MOREL

Flyweight

By Pete Ehrmann



Bob Lynch wonders if the secret to the punching power that has marked Eric Morel's short professional boxing career may actually be potable.

"It could be the water in Wisconsin. There's so damn much iron in it," says the 64-year-old Madison coach who has been handling the 1996 U.S. Olympian for the last five years.

Lynch is kidding, but with six knockouts in his first eight professional bouts, Morel is clearly not the same fighter who told a reporter several months before last year's Olympic Games, "I'm a boxer, not a fighter. I like to hit, score my points, and get out of there. Hit and run. I don't like to be right there fighting with anybody."

"Little Hands Of Steel" is what Morel's Olympic teammates started calling him after the 112-pounder began manhandling them in sparring sessions. Lynch says that when they train in out-of-town gyms, heads turn at the thunderous cracks that resound when Morel hits the pads.

"It sounds like rifle shots," he says, "People can't believe it's coming from a man his size."

Even Morel himself seems surprised by the turn of events. "Every time I put my hands to someone, they just go down. It's not my fault," says the 21-year-old Morel, who hopes to put his hands on world championships at three different weights before he's through with the sport he took up at age seven in his native San Juan, Puerto Rico.

One of nine children—he has seven brothers and a sister—Morel followed older

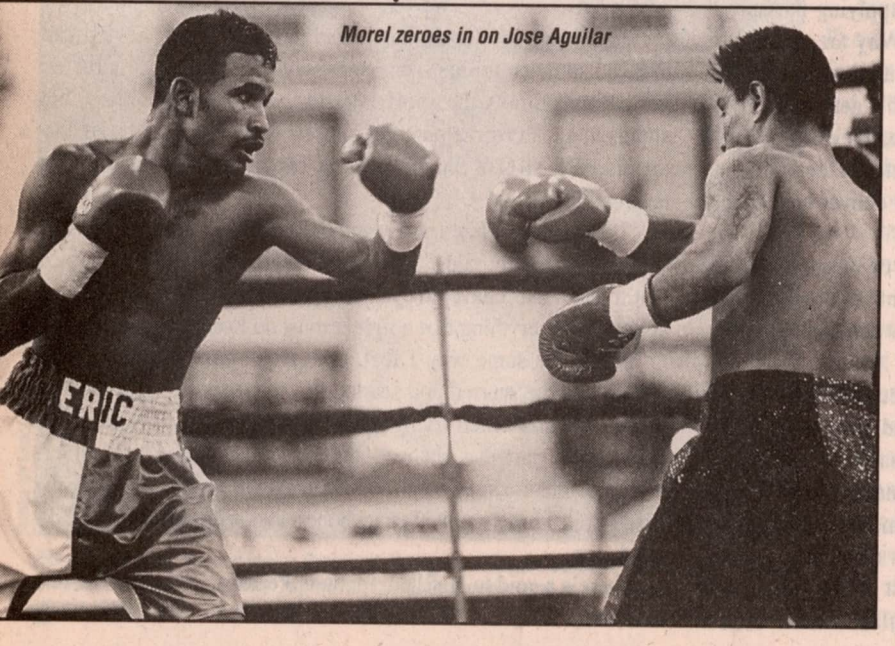
(Continued on page 70)

PRO RECORD

1996		
Oct. 11	Jose Aguilar, Las Vegas	KO 3
Nov. 30	Joseph Salazar, Albuquerque	KO 1
1997		
Jan. 11	Ruben Romero, Las Vegas	KO 1
Feb. 12	David Chamendis, New York City	KO 1
March 8	Esteban Ayala, Albuquerque	KO 2
April 4	Jesus Jimenez, Las Vegas	KO 2
April 12	Jesus Lopez, Las Vegas	W 4
June 14	Armando Diaz, San Antonio	W 4
July 12	Mauro Diaz, Biloxi, MS	KO 2

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	KOs
9	9	0	0	7

Photos by Chris Farina



Morel zeroes in on Jose Aguilar

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HEAVYWEIGHT Ch: Brian Nielson 1-Lennox Lewis 2-Evander Holyfield 3-Andrew Golota 4-Michaell Moorer 5-Ray Mercer 6-Kirk Johnson 7-Michael Grant 8-Ike Ibeabuchi 9-David Tua 10-Chris Byrd

CRUISERWEIGHT Ch: James Toney 1-Nate Miller 2-Marcelo Dominquez 3-Uriah Grant 4-Robert Daniels 5-Fabrice Tiozzo 6-Ralf Rocchigiani 7-Torsten May 8-Chris Eubank 9-Adolpho Washington 10-Don Diego Poeder

LT. HEAVYWEIGHT Ch: Drake Thadzi 1-Dariusz Michalczewski 2-Montell Griffin 3-Roy Jones Jr. 4-Virgil Hill 5-Fredrik Alvarez 6-Graciano Rocchigiani 7-Darren Allen 8-William Guthrie 9-Rocky Gannon 10-Michael Nunn

SP.MIDDLEWEIGHT Ch: Mads Larsen 1-Steve Collins 2-Frank Liles 3-Robin Reid 4-Joseph Kiwanuka 5-Roberto Duran 6-Charles Brewer 7-Glenn Thomas 8-Vinny Pazienza 9-Jorge Castro 10-Omar Sheika

MIDDLEWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Keith Holmes 2-William Joppy 3-Bernard Hopkins 4-Dana Rosenblatt 5-Lonnie Bradley 6-Hector Camacho 7-Paul Vaden 8-Quincy Taylor 9-Otis Grant 10-Silvio Branco

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Terry Norris 2-Laurent Boudaouani 3-Winky Wright 4-Jose Luis Lopez 5-Raul Marquez 6-Julio Cesar Vasquez 7-Shibata Flores 8-Emmett Linton Jr. 9-Gianfranco Rosi 10-Anthony Stephens

WELTERWEIGHT Ch: Jose Rivera 1-Kevin Lueshing 2-Felix Trinidad 3-Oscar De La Hoya 4-Ike Quartey 5-Pernell Whitaker 6-Oba Carr 7-Gary Murray 8-Patrick Charpentier 9-Derrell Coley 10-Wilfredo Rivera

JR. WELTERWEIGHT Ch: Johar Lashin 1-Vince Phillips 2-Miguel Angel Gonzalez 3-Khalid Rahilou 4-Kostya Tszyu 5-Frankie Randell 6-Julio Cesar Chavez 7-Paul Nava 8-Charles Murray 9-Hector Lopez 10-Rodney Wilson

LIGHTWEIGHT Ch: Tony Pep 1-Orzubek Nazarov 2-Phillip Holiday 3-Steve Johnston 4-Shane Mosley 5-George Scott 6-Lamar Murphy 7-Jean Baptist Mendy 8-John John Molina 9-Atur Grigorian 10-Billy Irwin

JR. LIGHTWEIGHT Ch: Troy Dorsey 1-Arturo Gatti 2-Genaro Hernandez 3-Yong Soo Choi 4-Azumah Nelson 5-Joel Casamayor 6-Anatoli Alexandrov 7-Regilio Tuur 8-Angel Manfredy 9-Dennis Holbaek 10-Gabriel Ruelas

FEATHERWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Naseem Hamed 2-Luisito Espinosa 3-Wilfredo Vasquez 4-Tom Johnson 5-Franciso Segura 6-David Toledo 7-Eloy Rojas 8-Kevin Kelly 9-Johnny Lewis 10-Carmelo Negron

JR. FEATHERWEIGHT Ch: Sergei Devakov 1-Junior Jones 2-Daniel Zaragoza 3-Antonio Cermino 4-Vuyani Bungu 5-Marco Antonio Barrera 6-Wayne McCullough 7-Kennedy McKinney 8-Erik Morales 9-Rico Siodora 10-Frankie Toledo

BANTAMWEIGHT Ch: Johnny Bredahl 1-Mbulelo Botile 2-Robbie Regan 3-Nana Konadu 4-Daorung Siriwat 5-Veeraphol Sahaprom 6-Sirimon Nakornthornparkview 7-Paulie Ayala 8-Tim Austin 9-Jorge Julio 10-John M. Johnson

JR. BANTAMWEIGHT Ch: Angel Almena 1-Danny Romero 2-Gerry Penalosa 3-Johnny Tapia 4-Katsuya Onizuka 5-Yokthai Sith-Oar 6-Luis Bolanos 7-Ratanchai Sor Voraphin 8-Torsak Saspraphagym 9-Hiroshi Kawashima 10-Harold Grey

FLYWEIGHT Ch: Scotty Olson 1-Yuri Arbachakov 2-Mark Johnson 3-Jesus Zuniga 4-Jose Bonilla 5-David Guerault 6-Carlos Salazar 7-Saen Sow Pleonchit 8-Arthur Johnson 9-Jesper D. Jensen 10-Will Grigsby

JR. FLYWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Ricardo Lopez 2-Saman Sorjaturong 3-Keji Yamaguchi 4-Michael Carbajal 5-Jake Matlala 6-Hi-Yong Choi 7-Maricio Pastrana 8-Hadao C. P. Gym 9-Nungdien Sakchaporn 10-Jesus Chong

MINI-FLYWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Ricardo Lopez 2-Ratanapol Sow Voraphin 3-Alex Sanchez 4-Rosendo Alvarez 5-Juan Herrera 6-Kermin Guardia 7-Song Porpaoin 8-Chana Porpaoin 9-Rolando Tuyugon 10-Edgar Cardenas

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TAPIA-ROMERO:

THE LITTLE GUYS COME UP BIG

Boxing The Way It Ought To Be

By Tim Graham

After years of anticipation, finger-pointing, trash-talking, and blood-boiling, it took 12 rounds of physical confrontation to get it done. The backyard rivalry between Johnny Tapia and Danny Romero finally was settled. Or was it?

The bitter enemies who once trained together in the same Albuquerque gym had just left everything in the ring at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas. Tapia entered as the junior bantamweight champion of the spurious WBO, while Romero was the IBF titleholder, but pride was the ultimate prize. Drama built as the scorecards were collected. A bit of doubt hung in the arena. But the judges handed Tapia a unanimous decision, and the champion cried like a baby-faced assassin.

The beleaguered Tapia did it for his wife. He did it for his murdered mother. He did it for his hometown. He did it for his own peace of mind. But he did not intend to do it for his sport.

After the final bell, a sigh was audible around the boxing world. Both men fought with pride and dignity, snipping a string of major bouts that had ended in controversy and/or disgrace.

"We in boxing needed this fight more than Tapia and Romero did," said George Foreman, analyst for the HBO-televised event. "We needed an excellent fight and an ending like this."

It had started with Oliver McCall's breakdown against Lennox Lewis. Dealing with the demons of drug abuse, McCall simply deteriorated before our eyes, reduced to tears in the ring before referee Mills Lane stepped in. The slump continued with Oscar De La Hoya's controversial decision over Pernell Whitaker. De La Hoya easily won on all three cards, but many felt Whitaker deserved the win. The sport bottomed out with Mike Tyson's horrific disqualification loss in his rematch with Evander Holyfield. Then, exactly two weeks after the Tyson buffet, Lewis again was the recipient of a freak victory when a hold-happy Henry Akinwande was DQ'd.

Those fights considered, it was easy to understand the magnitude of Tapia-Romero, a bout already touted as the biggest in the history of the 115-pound class and a potential fight of the year. The storylines were many: neighborhood grudge match ... polar personalities ... both trained at one time under Danny Romero Sr. Tapia, 30, is a recovering drug addict who was banned from boxing for three years because of cocaine. His mother was raped and murdered when he was eight, and his father was killed before he was born. "The Baby-Faced Assassin" has be convicted on drug charges and for pulling a gun on his wife. On the other hand, Romero, 23, grew up in a loving household and walked the straight and narrow. With his matinee-idol good looks and the guidance of his father, he marketed himself as a superstar-to-be.

But with the fight's hype came anxiety, especially in the aftermath of Holyfield-

Photo by Chris Farina

The dominant punch of the fight was Tapia's hook to the body, which he threw as a lead and from long range. Even when it didn't land cleanly, the punch looked spectacular, which might have impressed the judges.

Photo by Marty Rossengarten

Tapia had to respect Romero's booming right, which he landed only a handful of times throughout the fight. Tapia-Romero was much more a boxing match than a slugfest, which worked in Tapia's favor.

Photo by Chris Farina

Tapia fought with his usual emotion, committing to punches and playing to the crowd. His style was in sharp contrast to Romero, who was controlled all the way.

Tyson II. Adding to boxing's troubles that June night were several incidents at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, the site of the bout. Fights broke out in the stands, and shortly after the match, a number of people were trampled when they thought they heard gunfire inside the hotel-casino.

Long before that ugly night, co-promoters Bob Arum (Tapia) and Cedric Kushner (Romero) exercised caution, placing Tapia-Romero in Las Vegas partly because of security concerns stemming from the rivalry's volatility. An added factor was financial; New Mexico's tax laws aren't as kind as Nevada's.

But after the near-riots following Holyfield-Tyson II, the original site of Tapia-Romero, the Las Vegas Hilton, pulled out. The Hilton's official reason for dropping the bout was a missing certificate of insurance from the promoters, but that excuse was widely accepted as a thinly veiled attempt to avoid a potential maelstrom. The fight was quickly picked up by the Thomas & Mack Center, with Caesars Palace joining on as the host hotel.

Inside the Thomas & Mack, an extra 130 Las Vegas Metro police officers were on the scene and highly visible, as were 50 members of the Caesars Palace security force. Also working the fight were three specially trained gang-observation units. All fans, officials, and participants passed through metal detectors at the entrances. Even ringside physician Flip Homansky's bag was thoroughly searched.

But only emotion spilled around the ring, and not one drop of mayhem.

"The theater of the unexpected finally happened in a positive way tonight," HBO's Larry Merchant said. "We showed you a fight we don't have to be ashamed of. This is the way it was supposed to be."

Tapia appeared more like a baby-faced grim reaper as he approached the ring in a black robe, the hood shading his face. As he reached the first step, he kissed his gloves and saluted the pro-Tapia crowd of 7,594, sending his fans into bedlam. He then sent them over the edge when he stepped between the ropes, ripped off his hood, and snapped his head toward his rival, sending a steely stare. Next, he knelt in his corner, as he does before every fight, and prayed.

Meanwhile, Romero's every move was passionately booed despite the fact that he was decked out in the yellow and red colors of New Mexico's state flag. "I didn't even hear them," Romero later said of the crowd.

At the futile objections of referee Mitch Halpern (USA), Tapia jogged in place in ring-center as he awaited the first bell.

Photo by Marty Rosenbaum

Referee Mitch Halpern kept Tapia under control, warning him for excessive clowning. While Tapia's theatrics may seem extraneous, they help fuel him to victory.

Tapia's motor was running, and he was showing no signs of letting it idle. The gong was a sweet sound for Albuquerque and those at the Thomas & Mack.

Romero, 114, who entered as the slightest of favorites, was cautious and looked to counter to the head. Tapia, 114, wasted no time in throwing combinations to the body and was quick to show disdain for his foe. Less than two minutes into the fight, he mocked a Romero shot with an ear-to-ear grin. He would maintain that expression for much of the bout.

At the advice of co-trainers Jesse Reid and Eddie Futch, Tapia stayed surprisingly tactical in the early rounds, while Romero remained content to move side to side and counter. ("We thought Johnny was gonna come right at Danny," said Danny Sr.) Tapia circled right and utilized his stick-and-move philosophy; Romero attempted to land heavy rights to the head. The first heated exchange came with five seconds remaining in the third. Tapia ducked a jab and dug to the body with a pair of left hooks. He then slipped a Romero jab and connected with a straight right to the chin and another hook to the stomach at the bell.

Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Tapia greeted the final bell with a backflip, while a somber Romero returned to his corner. Both fighters said they thought they deserved the decision. Their respective body language suggested otherwise.

Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Team Tapia is captained by Johnny's wife Teresa (above), who brings a touch of sanity to his "crazy life." There were no celebratory kisses for Romero, who is guided by his father, Danny Sr. (right).

Sensing command, Tapia became increasingly cocky in the fourth. Forty seconds in, Romero followed a jab with a hard straight right to the cheek. Tapia responded by dropping his gloves and sticking out his chin. Romero quickly nailed the inviting target with a left, but Romero refused to be affected by Tapia's antics and held fast to his game plan. After a Tapia left-right, Romero countered with a solid overhand right to the forehead. Tapia did not back down and blasted Romero with an overhand right of his own after the bell, drawing a warning from Halpern.

Romero started to open up in the fifth, markedly increasing his aggression. Two rights during the frame turned Tapia's head. The youngster continued to land

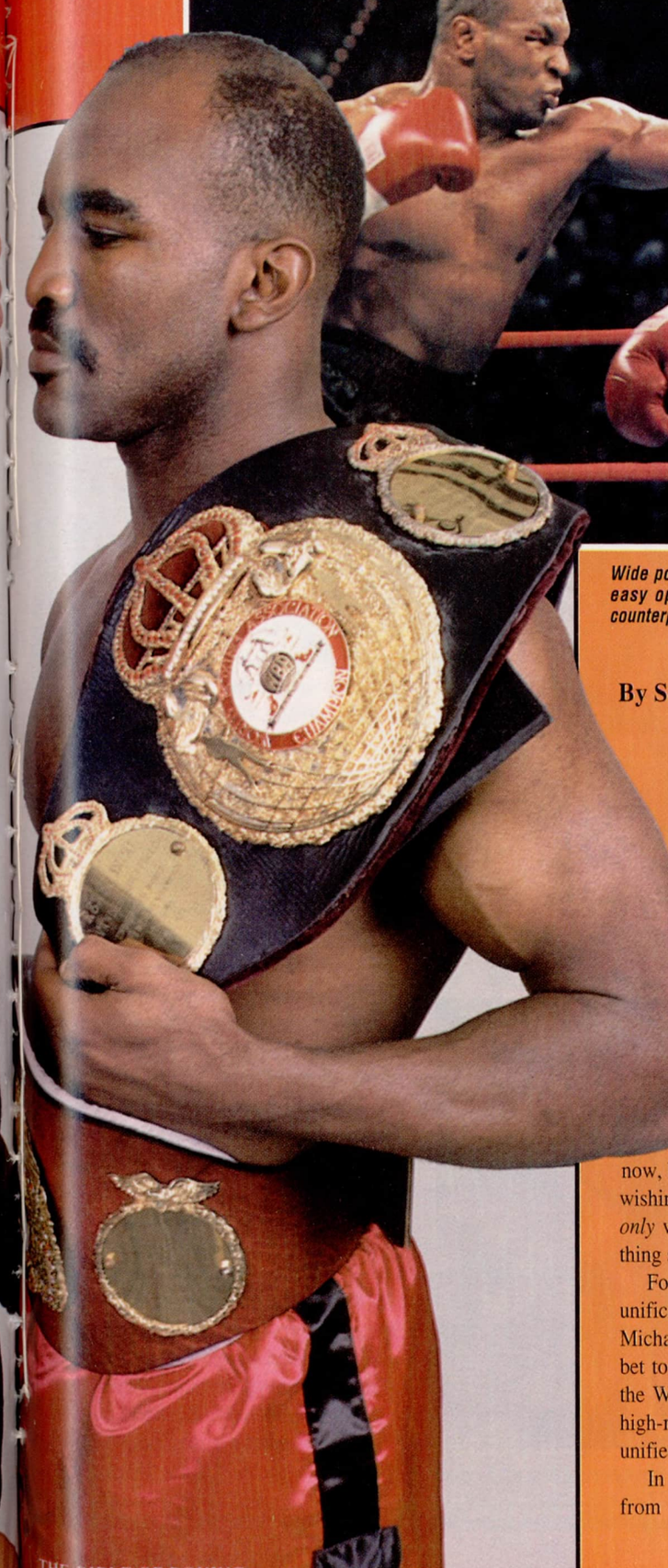
(Continued on page 69)

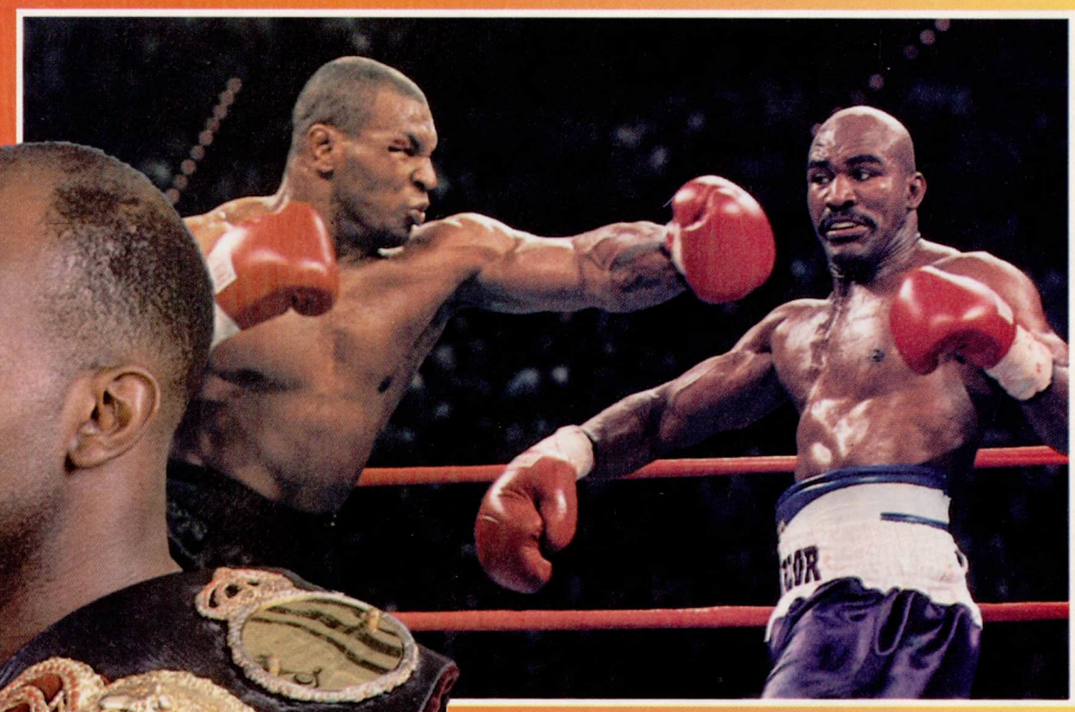
EVANDER HOLYFIELD:

WHY MOORER WILL BE TOUGHER THAN TYSON

Jabbing from his southpaw stance, Moorer cleverly outboxed a lethargic Holyfield. Will "The Real Deal" be far more motivated the second time around?

When they met in 1994, Moorer took two of the three heavyweight belts from Holyfield. Three years later, Holyfield's goal is to reunify the title.





Wide powerpunches like this telegraphed left hook made Mike Tyson an easy opponent for Holyfield. Moorer, however, rarely offers such counterpunching opportunities.

By Steve Farhood

If you're only as good as your last fight, can Evander Holyfield hear the whispers? Only if they're aimed at his *left* ear.

Holyfield may no longer be anatomically correct, but that isn't going to stop him from seeking to unify the heavyweight title. As for the whispers, they go something like this: Is it possible that one of the greatest heavyweight champions in history will again lose to a fighter who barely edged *Vaughn Bean?*

If you are what you eat, Mike Tyson has been metamorphosized into an insignificant chunk of cartilage. Despite what the media might have you believe, boxing will survive with Tyson in purgatory. In fact, with WBA champion Holyfield at the helm, the Sweet Science just might thrive. Don't look now, but the type of world heavyweight champion we're always wishing and hoping for has arrived. Now if he can become the *only* world heavyweight champion, we'll really be onto something special.

For Evander Holyfield, American Hero, step number one is a unification battle against IBF champion and former conqueror Michael Moorer. As we went to press, the matchup was a good bet to materialize sometime in early-November. On October 4, the WBC champion, Lennox Lewis, was scheduled to make a high-risk defense against Andrew Golota. We may be closer to a unified title than we realize.

In April 1994, Moorer won two-thirds of the title by rising from an early-rounds knockdown and outpointing Holyfield.

Holyfield is strengthened by the support of his bride, the former Dr. Janice Itson. Since remarrying, the champion has regenerated his interest in boxing.

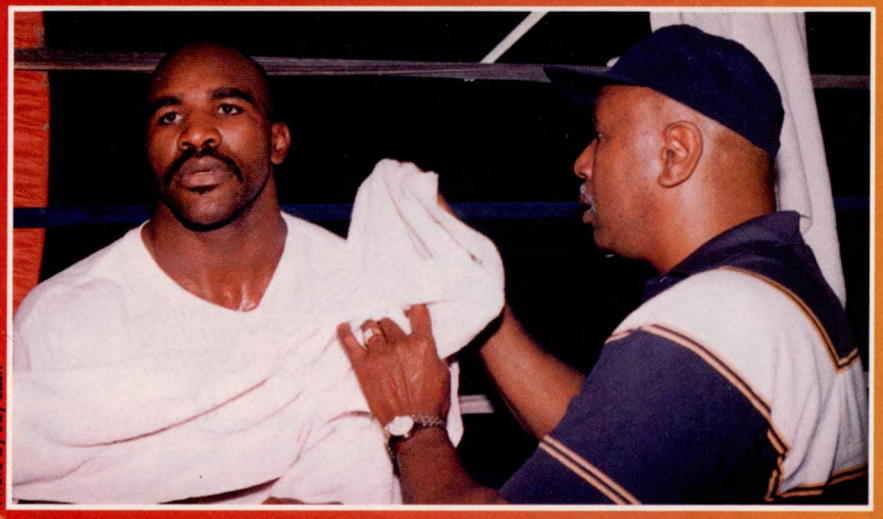


Photo by Jay Lash

Trainer Don Turner says Holyfield will be pumped up to fight Moorer because the champion doesn't want to lose his hard-earned status as one of the greatest heavyweight champions of all-time.

Holyfield was clearly beaten after 12 rounds with Moorer. Will the rematch be different? If recent form accounts for anything, Holyfield should gain revenge.

Afterward, we were told that Holyfield had fought with a bad shoulder, fell into cardiac arrest every time he hooked off his jab, caught Lyme disease from the ringposts, and had his stomach pumped after ingesting poisonous algae between rounds seven and eight. What are the chances any of that will happen again? All that talk about history repeating itself, it's a bunch of nonsense, right?

One thing's for sure: Holyfield isn't the same fighter who lost to Moorer 3½ years ago. Like fellow zillionaire performers Madonna and Michael Jackson, and fellow heavyweight champions Muhammad Ali and George Foreman, "The Real Deal" has mastered the art of reinventing himself. (Larry Holmes should try it.) Change is everywhere: Holyfield is trained by Don Turner and Tommy Brooks, not Lou Duva and George Benton. Manager Shelly Finkel is gone, and Holyfield is advised by a lawyer (Jim Thomas), and not a car salesman (Ken Sanders). For now, at least, his promoter is Don King, and not Main Events. He's married for a second time, to a doctor no less (take that, AMA!), and as of this writing, was about to become a new father.

And we've saved the best for last: The blown-up cruiserweight is now a heavyweight legend.

In a sense, Moorer has reinvented himself as well. In his days as a light heavyweight at the Kronk gym, he starved himself while craving violence. Or at least so we were told. He's eating fine these days, but his reluctance to train and fight with spunk alienated Teddy Atlas to such an extent that the trainer walked away. Whatever happened to Violent Mike?

"The real nature of Michael Moorer is he doesn't like boxing," said Emanuel Steward, the fighter's first pro trainer. "I never had a fighter who had such a distaste for boxing. He has no concern for what the public or the media feels about him.

"If Michael can hit you with his right jab, that's all he's gonna do. With Kronk it was different. You became what you were associated with. At Kronk, winning a fight by decision was almost a disgrace. But with Michael now, all factors point to a fighter who isn't gonna take a lot of risks."

(Continued on page 69)

John "The Beast" Mugabi hammers Marvin Hagler during their middleweight title fight in 1986. Hagler kept the title by 11th-round kayo.

40 FORMER CHAMPS REMEMBER THEIR BIGGEST HITS

Compiled by Steve Farhood

It's amazing how, regardless of their age, boxers instantly recall the smallest details of their bouts. During Induction Weekend at the International Boxing Hall of Fame, long-retired former fighters like Tony DeMarco and Gene Fullmer told stories not only about every win and loss, but every punch given and taken. What better setting, then, to begin quizzing 40 former world champions on the best single punch they ever landed, and the best single punch they ever absorbed?

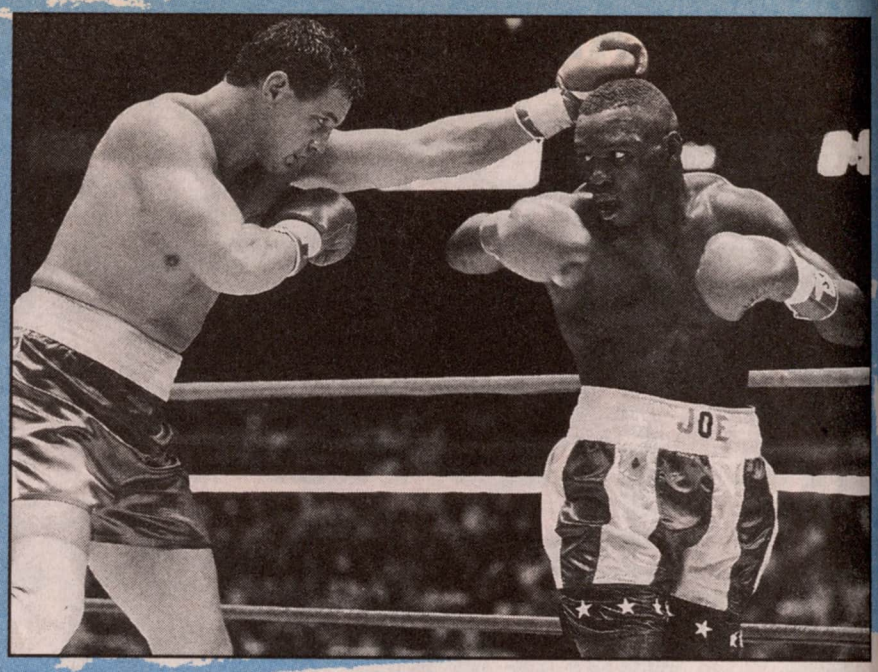
Some of the answers were predictable (Larry Holmes said Earnie Shavers hit him harder than anyone else), and some were surprising (Marvin Hagler said Loucif Hamani was the fighter he hit the hardest). In answering the first question, several former titlists said that after landing their hardest shots, they feared for their victims' health. In answering the second, some flinched in remembering the crippling blows they fielded, while others pointed out that it was never the knockout punches that hurt the most. As Michael Dokes said of sparmate Earnie Shavers, "He hit so hard, I don't remember."

Call it selective memory.

Robert Daniels

"I hit Craig Bodzianowski with a counter right to the chin in the eighth or ninth round [in a July 1990 title defense]. It just felt right. I had the guy out; he almost went down, but the ref held him up. It took the rest of the fight out of him.

"In the seventh or eighth round of my fight against Taoufik Belbouli [in a November 1990 title defense], he hit me with a right hand to the chin. Belbouli's back was like a heavyweight's. I didn't let him know I was hurt. I don't remember much else about it because I don't *want* to remember."



Daniels (right) took the bite out of Craig Bodzianowski

Bobby Chacon

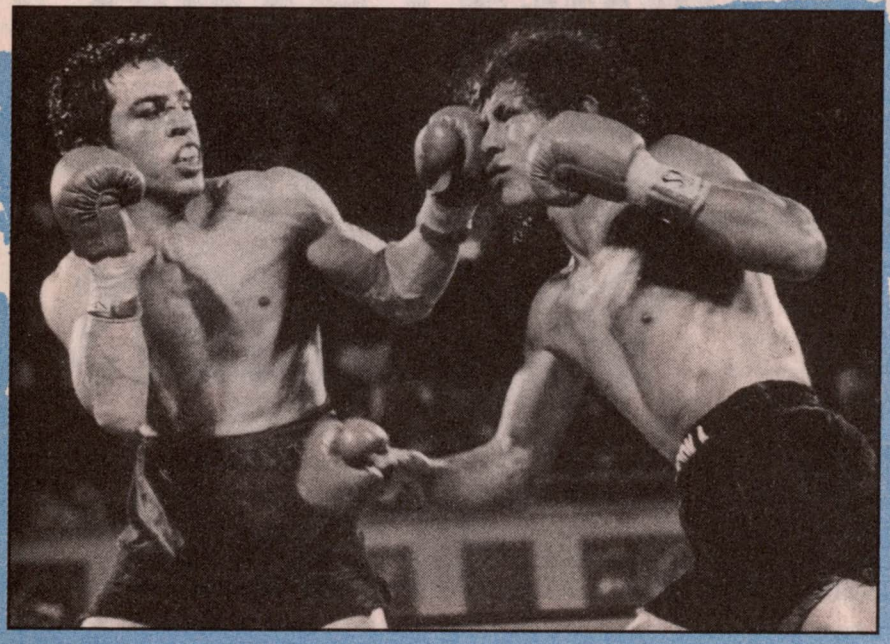
"The hardest blow I ever landed was a right cross to the jaw of Bazooka Limon when I won the junior lightweight title in December 1982. It was the last 15-round fight ever sanctioned by the WBC. I knocked him down 20 seconds before the fight ended, but he got up, which was an indication of how tough he was.

"The hardest shot I ever received was a left hook to my jaw thrown by David Sotelo in February 1976. It was my 33rd fight. He knocked me down and I don't remember getting up. I woke up in my dressing room and asked my manager, Joe Ponce, what round I had gotten knocked out in. He told me I had won the fight."

Dwight Muhammad Qawi

"In an Atlantic City cruiserweight fight in 1992, I hit a guy [Ric Lainhart] with a short right hand. I felt it all the way up my arm. He stood up on his toes like he was at attention, then fell right on his face. It was like a cartoon. I never saw anybody fall like that before. It was in the first round. He was counted out. They had to sweep him off the canvas. I was worried about it.

"The hardest I was hit was the first knockdown of my second fight with Evander Holyfield [in December 1987]. It was a right hand, and I didn't see it coming. Evander had snap in his punches. I had never before been down, and I went down twice in that round. Matthew Saad Muhammad was a hard puncher, too."



Chacon hit Bazooka Limon hard and often

Don Lalonde

"The hardest punch was the right hand I landed against Eddie Davis in the second round [of their 1987 title fight]. All the elements came together. I was in the right position, he was in the wrong position. It was a straight right to the chin, and it was kind of scary. I felt it reverberate all through my body, from my right hand down to my left foot. He wasn't moving for a long time. I was quite concerned.

"The hardest I've been hit, I'd have to say two fights. Both punches I never saw. First, the eighth round of my NABF title fight against Willie Edwards in 1985. He hit me with a left hook and I ended up on my waist. I got stopped in the ninth round and went down a total of four times, but

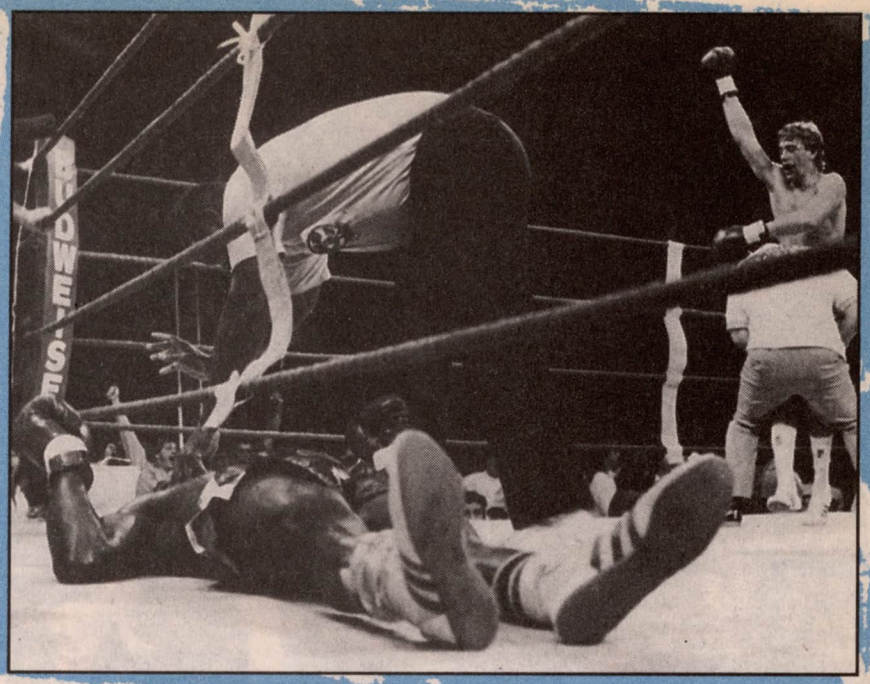
all the knockdowns were the result of that one punch. Also, the left hook Bobby Czyz hit me with in the first round [in a 1992 cruiserweight title fight]. It was the fifth round before I realized I was in a fight.

"The punch Ray Leonard hit me with? It was to the throat, and I was trying to get up at the count of one. Ray never hurt me with a punch."

Eddie Mustafa Muhammad

"Mario Rosa was a tough guy from Paterson, New Jersey. He knocked me down in the sixth and seventh rounds [during their bout in 1974], and in the eighth, I knocked him down with one shot, a right hand. It was the perfect punch, like Marciano hit Walcott with. He liked to bounce off the ropes and come straight at me. He figured I was done for. I didn't even have to jab first. I threw the right and just walked away. The Puerto Ricans wanted to kill me because Rosa had been on a roll. They could've counted to 400. I was in the shower and they were still scraping him off the canvas.

"The hardest I was ever hit was by Matthew Saad Muhammad [then Matthew Franklin] in Philadelphia [during a 10-round decision win in 1977]. It was a right hand right down the pike in the first round. I went down and split my trunks. I thought I was on a beach somewhere, laying down with my legs up in the air. It was like I was watching *Hawaii Five-0*. I was definitely hurt, but he didn't know it. I got up at five or six and kept the same facial expression. He never hit me again that way. Once was enough."

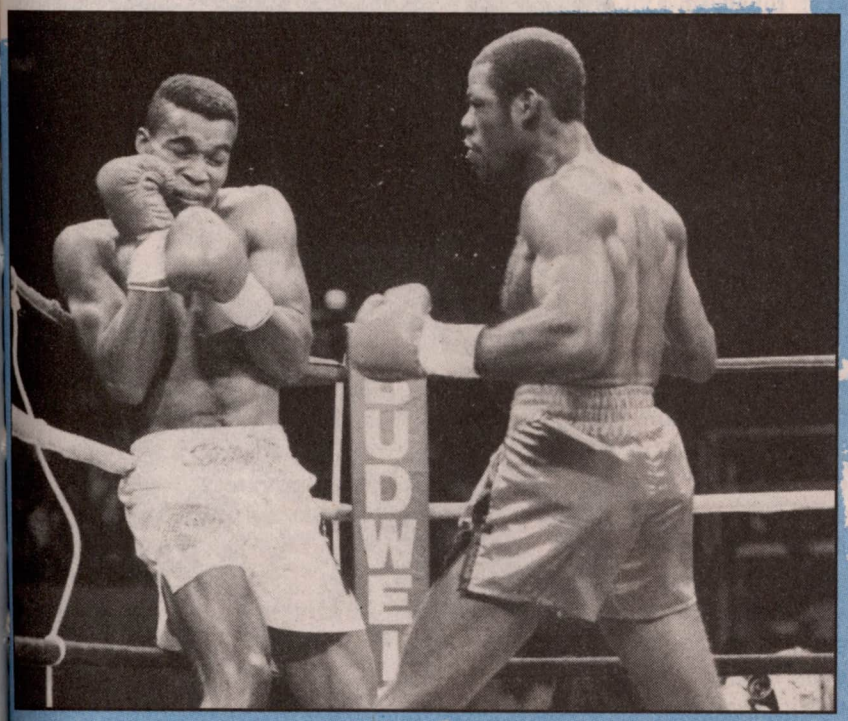


Lalonde left Eddie Davis motionless

Michael Nunn

"My knockout of Sumbu Kalambay [in a 1989 title fight] just happened so fast. I'm a boxer; I wasn't looking for it. I'd like to throw a few more shots like that. It was a picture-perfect shot, a left hand. [Nunn is a southpaw.] From the way he was shaking on the canvas, I knew I had hit him real hard.

"Iran Barkley [whom Nunn outpointed in a 1989 title fight] could punch. He was a strong guy with heavy hands. He hurt me more than anyone else. I felt it more than the James Toney fight. Remember, I'm pretty elusive; I don't get hit with too many clean shots."

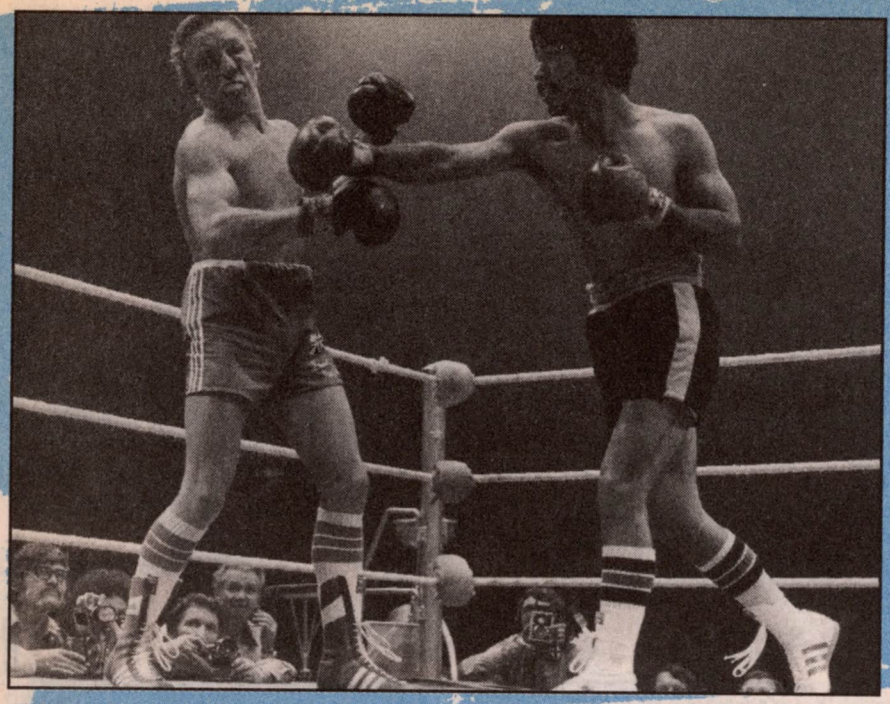


Nunn says Iran Barkley hit hardest of all

Curtis Cokes

"I remember hitting Joe Miceli with a counter straight right that broke his nose [in 1961]. He went down and there was blood everywhere. As a fighter, Joe was on his way down, but he got up and I beat him on points.

"[In 1961] Charley 'Tombstone' Smith hit me with a left hook and I saw stars for 30 minutes. He drove me



Palomino found the chin of Dave Boy Green

into the ropes, and they called it a knockdown because the ropes held me up. That's when I knew I could take a punch. I had him down a couple of times. He got tired and I beat him on points."

Troy Dorsey

"Not counting kicking [Dorsey is a champion kickboxer], the hardest I ever hit anybody was Alfred Rangel when I won the world title [in 1991]. It was a right hand over his jab. I always expect 'em to get up, but after a few seconds I saw that he was kind of opening and closing his mouth. I had broken his jaw. It was such a clean, nice shot. The timing and power were perfect.

"I don't remember one shot in particular as the hardest I've been hit with, but Jorge Paez had some real fast punches, and every once in a while he'd land a real hard one. He did knock me down once, but the shot didn't seem special."

Carlos Palomino

"What I remember about my most sensational knockouts is that I didn't think I hit the guys all that hard. Coming up, I fought Jose Miranda at the Olympic Auditorium [in 1974]. He was winning the fight, and I hit him with an overhand right as we sort of separated from a clinch. It was right on the chin, and he went down like he was shot. The ref just waved his hands that the fight was over.

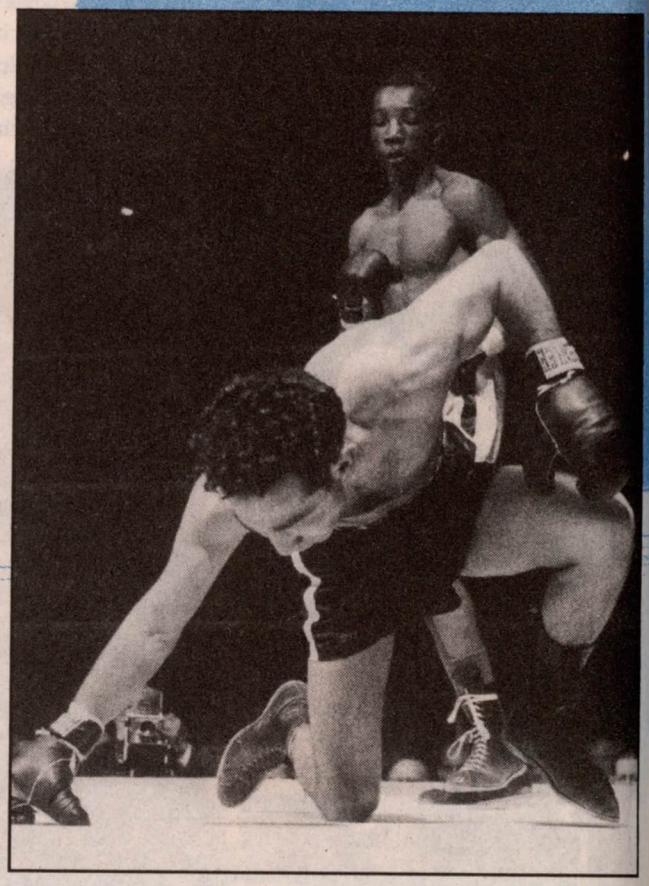
"Also, the left hook I hit Dave Boy Green with in our title fight [in 1977]. It was in the 11th round of a very close fight. His back hit the mat and he bounced. The ref just bent down and took out his mouthpiece.

"The hardest I was ever hit was in the 139-pound Pan-Am Trials finals in 1971. I fought Norman Goins in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I got dropped in every round, but I got up each time and won the fight. In the first round I was outpunching him five, six punches to one, but every time he hit me with his right hand, he moved me. Before the fight, I remember Javier Muniz [th brother of future Palomino opponen Mando Muniz] telling me before th fight, 'Whatever you do, stay close t the guy because he's a murderou puncher.'"

Willie Pep

"That's a funny question. I can' tell you who I hit the harde because I wasn't a puncher. I think was my ex-wife I hit the hardest But she stood right there and punched me back.

"The guy who hit me the hardest, of course, was Sandy Saddler He was a fair puncher. This gu was trained to beat me. I beat fou guys that beat him, so I said, 'I won't have any trouble with thi guy.' And he caught me. I was in good shape, but he kicked the daylights outta me. Whatta you gonna do?"



Pep felt Saddler's power in all four fights

Kid Gavilan

"The hardest I hit anyone was Carmen Basilio [in their 1953 title fight]. A right hand. I hit Sugar Ray Robinson with hard punches with both hands [in 1948 and '49]. Johnny Bratton, I broke his jaw [in their 1951 title fight].

"The hardest puncher was Sugar Ray Robinson. Both hands. Both fights. But he couldn't put me on the floor. He told me, 'Don't let anyone tell you I beat you. They took it from you.'"

Bob Foster

"I hit Mike Quarry [in 1972], Dick Tiger [in 1968], Vicente Rondon [in 1972]. Rondon was the only guy I really wanted to take his head off. He talked trash. But I think I hit Quarry the hardest. Left hook. I hit all three of them with the same punch. I hit Rondon with a double left hook.

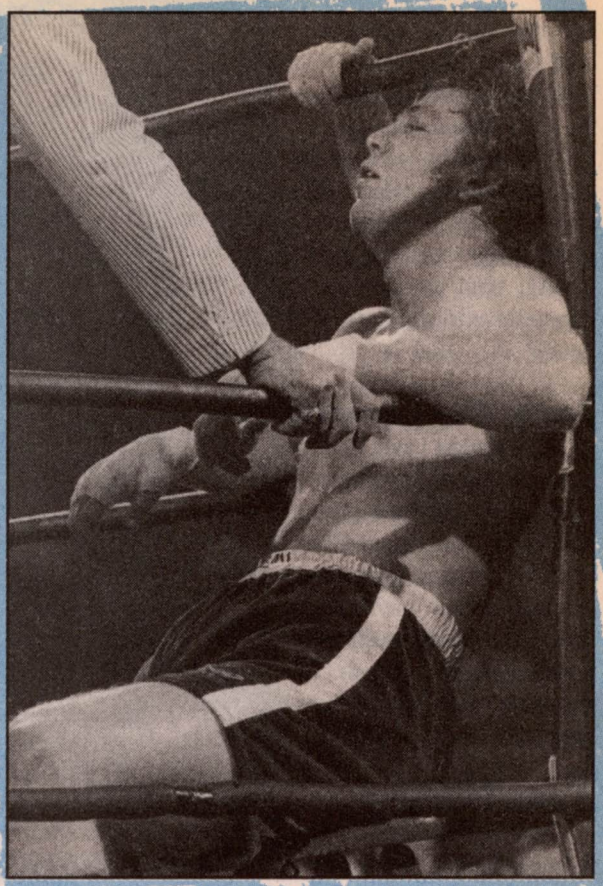
"I knew I was gonna hit Quarry in the third round, and I knocked him out in the fourth. I didn't have no doubt in my mind. I knew he was gone. I thought he was dead. I was looking at him and his eyes were rolling back up his head. They finally brought him around.

"Joe Frazier knocked me out, but the hardest punch I was hit with was from Roger Rouse [in their 1970 title fight]. Left hook, hit me right on the button. I didn't go down, but I wish I had. It was the first round. I came out in the second and said, 'You'll never hit me with that punch again.' Rouse hit me a whole lot harder than Joe did. [Foster stopped Rouse in the fourth.]"

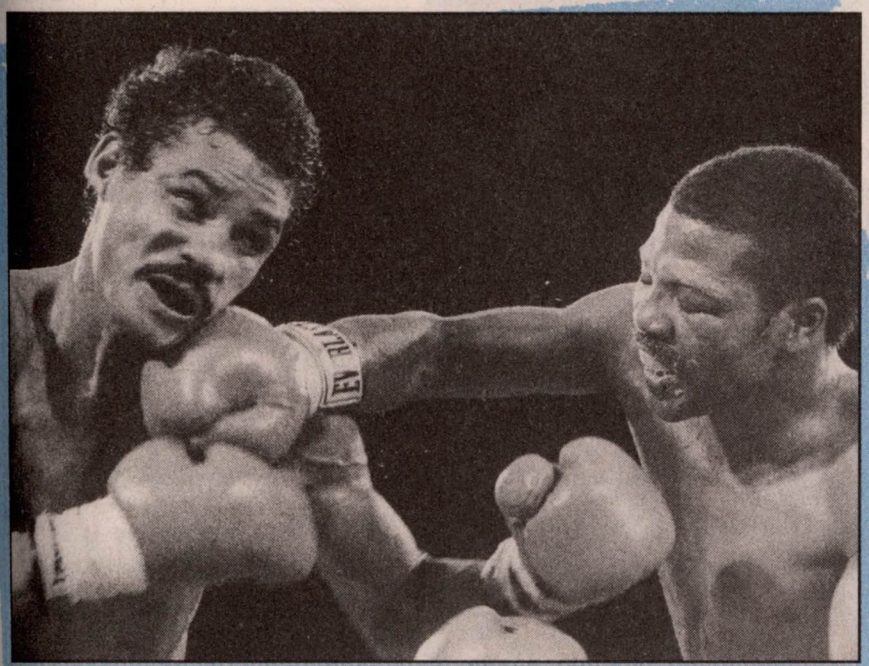
Alexis Arguello

"I remember one punch I really thought I hurt the guy. Diego Alcala in Puerto Rico [in a 1978 title fight]. It was a left to the chin and then a straight right in the first round. His eyes went white completely.

"In Puerto Rico, I had a tough one with Alfredo Escalera [in 1978]. Ruben Olivares was a big puncher, and Aaron Pryor, the second fight. With Pryor, I didn't want to go down, but the tiredness made me go down. He hit me with about 100 punches. But for one punch, I'd have to say it was Andy Ganigan [in their 1982 title fight]. It was a short left to the chin in the first round."



Foster left Mike Quarry in la-la-land



Arguello says Aaron Pryor "hit me with about 100 punches"

Carlos Ortiz

"I remember hitting Flash Elorde in the 14th round in our second fight in Madison Square Garden [in 1966]. It was the only time in my career I was afraid. Afraid that I had done something wrong to him. It was a left hook after a right hand. He went out.

"My fight with Len Matthews in Philadelphia [in 1959], he hit me with a left hook across the eyes, right in the middle of my face, and my whole face numbed up. I thought I had been paralyzed. But when I went back to the corner, it was just numb and I got away with it. [Ortiz went on to stop Matthews in round six.]"

Aaron Pryor

"Gaeton Hart [in a 1980 title fight]. I hit him with the best right hand I could throw. He went down

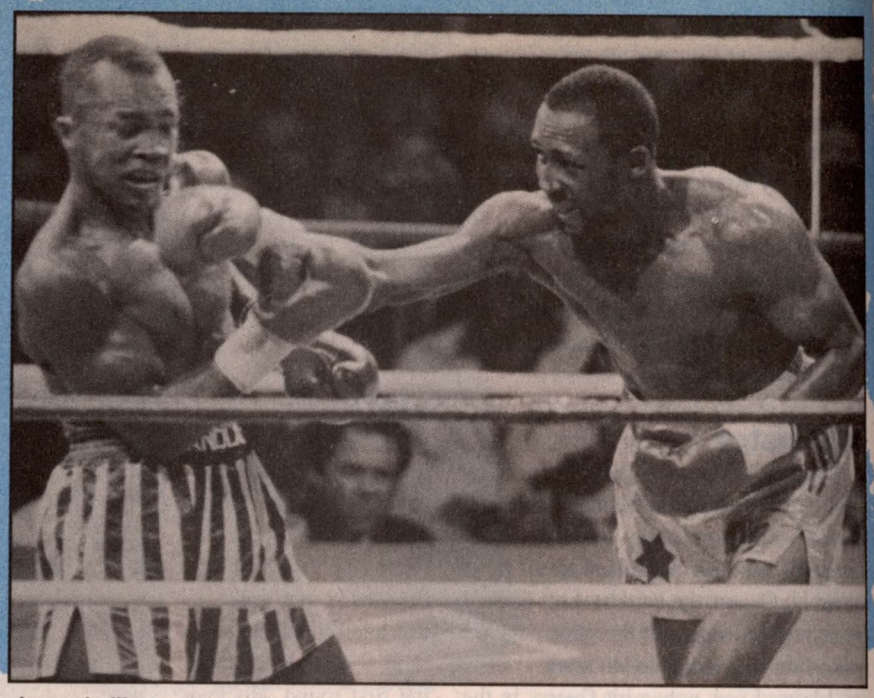
and that was the end of the fight. And Lennox Blackmoore, I hit him with the best left hook I ever threw [in a 1981 title fight].

"Hardest I ever been hit was Dujuan Johnson. He knocked me down in the first round with a straight right hand [in a 1981 title fight]. And of course, Alexis Arguello with that straight right hand."

Sugar Ray Leonard

"The hardest I ever hit anyone was probably Dave Boy Green [in their 1980 title fight], the left hook that knocked him out in round four.

"The hardest I've been hit—Thomas Hearns, the second fight [in 1989]. He hit me much harder in the second fight. Right hands. The hardest one wasn't even one of the knockdown punches."

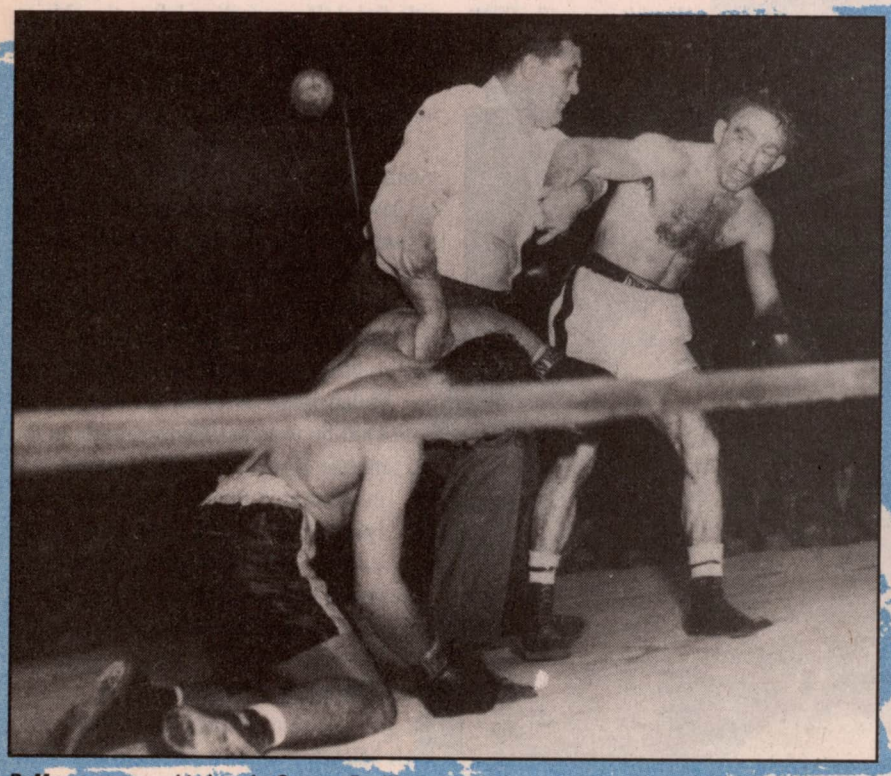


Leonard will never forget "The Hitman's" right hand

Tony DeMarco

"The hardest I ever hit anybody? When I fought Wilbur Wilson [in 1954], he was very determined to take over the Massachusetts/New England area. We were very competitive. He was a welterweight and I was a lightweight. I had boxed with him in the gym and I told everybody I was gonna knock him out in the first round. I hit him with everything—hooks, uppercuts, rights—but I couldn't knock him out. I beat him on points. Before the second fight [two months later], I hurt my left hand, and I told my friends my hand was a little sore and I'd beat him by decision. Sure enough, I hit him with a left hook in the second round, caught him flush on the jaw, and he went down for a count of 20. That was my favorite knockout.

"The hardest I ever got hit was by Carmen Basilio. The second fight [in 1955]. I had 71 fights and I was counted out only twice. One of them was the second Basilio fight. He hit me with a right cross in Boston [in the 12th round]."



DeMarco was caught clean by Carmen Basilio

Buddy McGirt

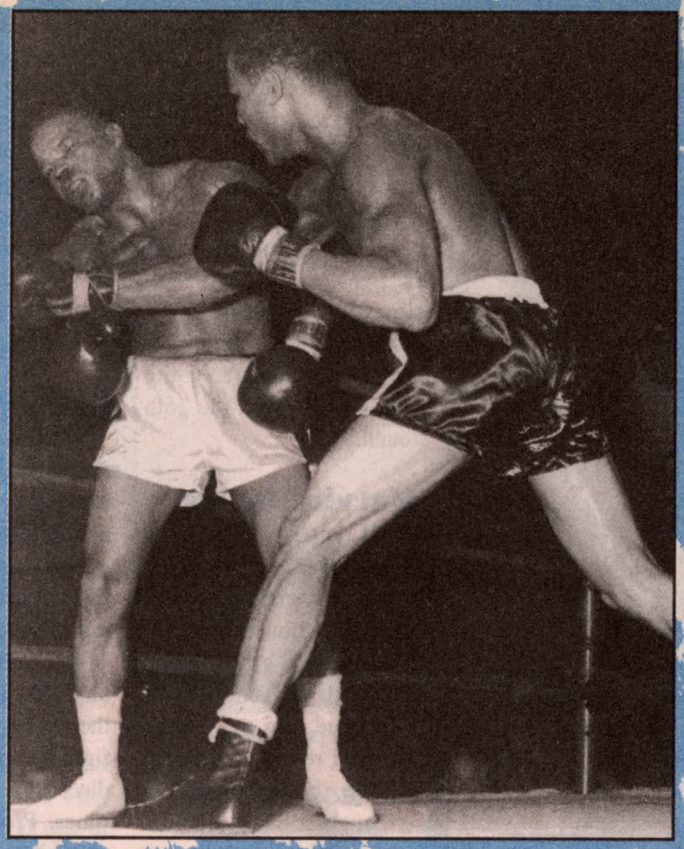
"The hardest I hit anybody was Vince Releford [in 1987]. I hit him a left hook to the body, then the chin, and knocked him out [in round 11]. He wasn't the same fighter after that. Matter of fact, I think he had one more fight and retired.

"The hardest I've been hit was by Tony Baltazar. He hit me a left hook to the chin, it was the second round, and next thing I remembered, it was the ninth round and I was winning the fight. I asked Al [Certo], 'What happened to the other rounds?' He said, 'Don't worry about it, just do what you're doing.'"

Jose Torres

"Frankie 'Kid' Anselm from Philadelphia [in 1958]. I was in a desperate fight with him. Even though I was winning the fight, I was getting tired because he refused to fall. All of a sudden I threw a punch and hit him with everything I had, and all of a sudden I wasn't tired anymore. He was down and out. It was a right hand.

"And I remember hitting Duilio Nunez [in 1962] with bodypunches that were to kill a mule. But he was a real pro. Evander Holyfield reminds me of him. I would hit him and he wouldn't show a thing. I knocked down Willie Pastrano with a bodypunch, but Nunez wouldn't budge.



This is the punch Torres used to kayo Frankie Anselm

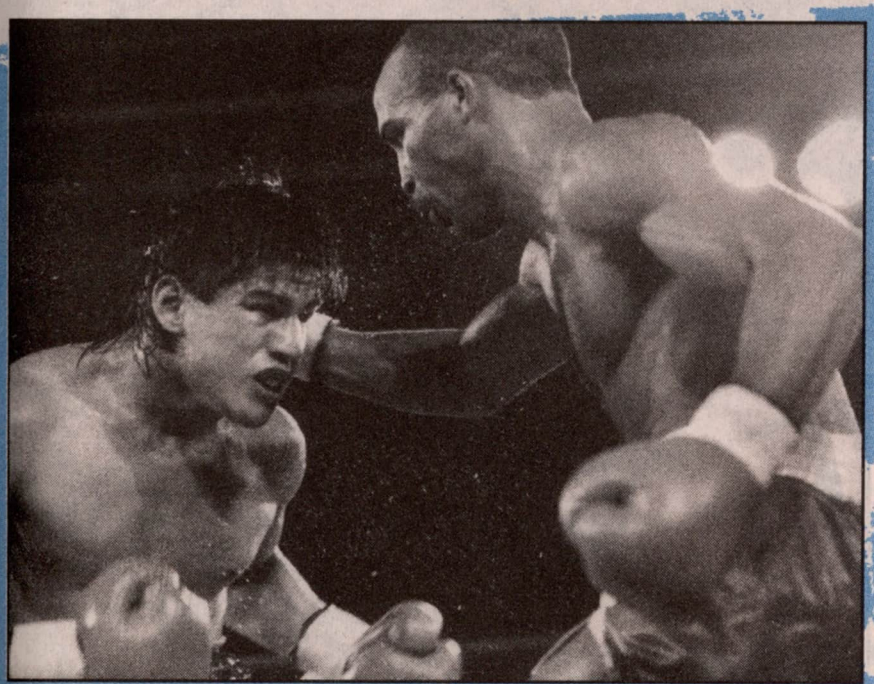
"I got knocked down by Florentino Fernandez in Puerto Rico in the first round [in 1963]. It had to be the cleanest punch I was ever hit with. Left hook. I didn't see the punch, I didn't feel no pain, I just went down. I can remember hitting the floor and coming up. My pride brought me up. It was the first time as a pro I had been down. [Fernandez stopped Torres in the fifth round.]

"Guys who couldn't punch hit me clean. I took chances with them. Like Benny 'Kid' Paret. He hit me with a great shot [in 1959], but he couldn't punch. Same with Skeeter McClure [in 1964]. In the 30 rounds I boxed with him [in 1966 and '67], Dick Tiger only hit me once with a clean shot, but it was nothing like Fernandez."

Ken Norton

"Oh, let's see. That's very difficult to say. When Jerry Quarry and I fought, I landed some good punches. But the hardest was Randy 'Tex' Cobb. It was either a left hook or uppercut. He blinked. That was it. He was a tough guy. He'd just scratch his chin and hit you back. I thought the hook would at least stun him, do something, but it didn't happen. All I did was snap his head.

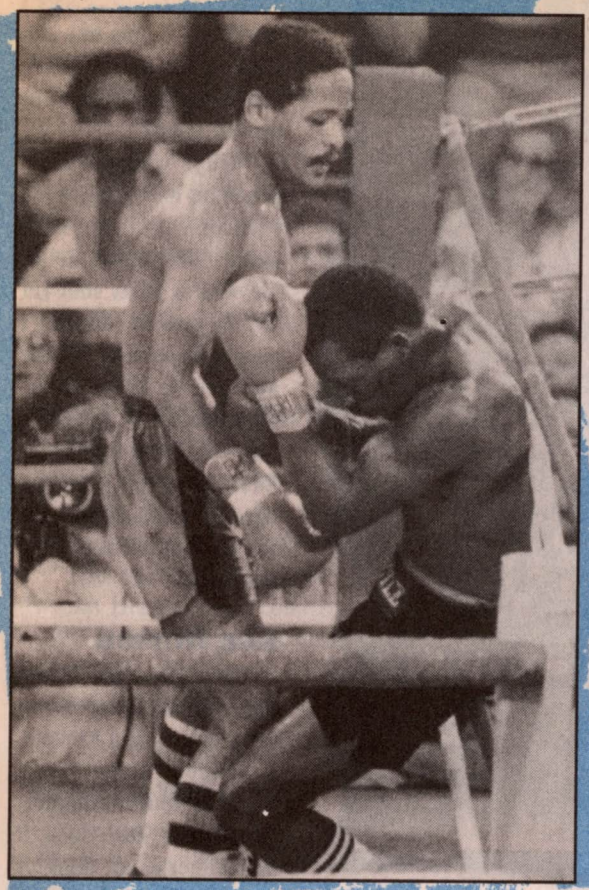
"The hardest shots you get hit with, you don't remember. The ones you remember were hard, but not knockout punches. Joe Frazier was the hardest puncher in workouts. Bodyshots. He'd hit you in your knee and your head would hurt. He was so powerful. He was so relentless, kept coming and coming, throwing that big hook. One time we were sparring at the Concord Hotel. He hit me with that hook and my whole body went numb. Earnie Shavers, I got hit and I was gone. No memory."



McGirt experienced Tony Baltazar's left hook first-hand

Wilfred Benitez

"The hardest punch was the right hand I hit Maurice Hope with [in their 1981 title fight]. I knocked him out with one punch. If I didn't knock him out with that punch, I'm not Wilfred Benitez.



Benitez watched Mo Hope sink slowly to the canvas

"The hardest punch I was hit with was from Bruce Curry in Madison Square Garden [in 1977]. It was the first time I went down. A right hand. They told me before the fight I was going to be fighting a boxer. But he was a big puncher."

Harold Gomes

"The hardest I ever hit anyone was my first television fight, in April '57, against Bobby Rogers in Providence. He came down from lightweight. After eight tremendous rounds of boxing and trading punches, I knocked him out in the ninth with a right-hand punch. As he was coming to me, I countered with a right and caught him right on the chin. I knocked him out dead. He went down face-first and was out. It was my start into the top-10.

"The hardest punch I took was actually three punches. A fighter from Texas, Paul Jorgensen, was the number-one featherweight, and I fought him twice. I fought him first in Miami Beach, then in Providence for the junior lightweight title when they revived it [in 1959]. He knocked me down three times with right hands in the 10th or 11th round, but I got up and still won the fight by 15-round decision. I was fighting on instinct; I didn't remember what happened from the knockdowns until the 15th round."

Marvin Hagler

"I remember. The guy from Algeria. I can't think of the name right now ... Hamani. Loucif Hamani [in 1980]. The fight was in Portland, Maine, and I knocked him out [in the second round] and was a little bit worried. I thought I had killed the guy. It's a very scary feeling because you never go in the ring with the intention of hurting anyone seriously. It's only a job. Unfortunately, you have to think about it this way: It could be you.

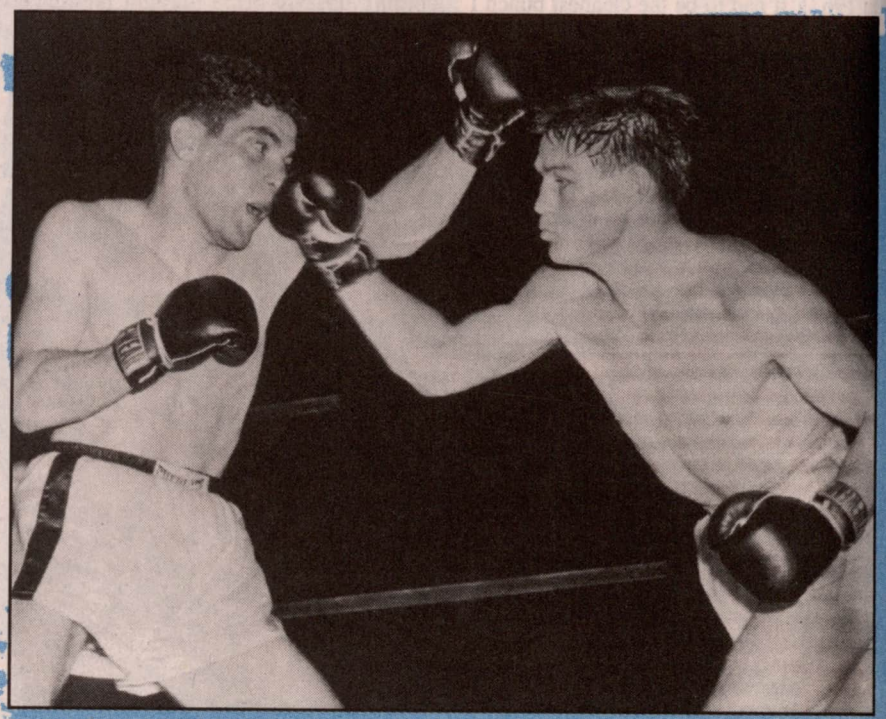
"Also, when I knocked out Tommy Hearns [in 1985]. I knew that I would've killed Tommy if he got back up."

"I got caught with a lot of good shots. John Mugabi caught me a good shot, Tony Sibson caught me a good shot. Tommy [Hearns] caught me a good shot. But they didn't bother me. All they did was make me mad, and then it's time to go to work. That or when I see blood."

Gene Fullmer

"I tried to hit 'em often, I never worried about hitting 'em too hard. I hit Florentino Fernandez quite a few shots upside the head and it didn't seem to bother him much [in their 1961 title fight]. But he hit me in the arm with a right hand and broke my arm. That hurt.

"I'll tell you the guy I beat worse than anybody else—Benny 'Kid' Paret [in their 1961 title fight]. I fought him the fight before he fought Emile Griffith and died. I hit him a lotta times, a lotta hard times. Probably more times hard than I ever hit anybody in my life. But he was a tough kid and took it. I finally knocked him out in the 10th round. Up to then he was taking some real shots. I feel bad now I did it.



Paul Jorgensen knocked Gomes down three times

"The hardest I was ever hit? I don't really know about that one because you don't remember the hardest shots. But for Fernandez to hit me and break my arm, that had to be a pretty hard shot. It was my right arm in the 13th round, and I fought the last two rounds with a broken arm."

Carmen Basilio

"Hardest punch? When I knocked Johnny Saxton out in Cleveland [in their 1957 title fight]. Second round. Left hook. While he was being counted out, his feet were up in the air, quivering. The minute I landed the punch, I knew he was gone. No way he was getting up. The referee didn't even bother to count.

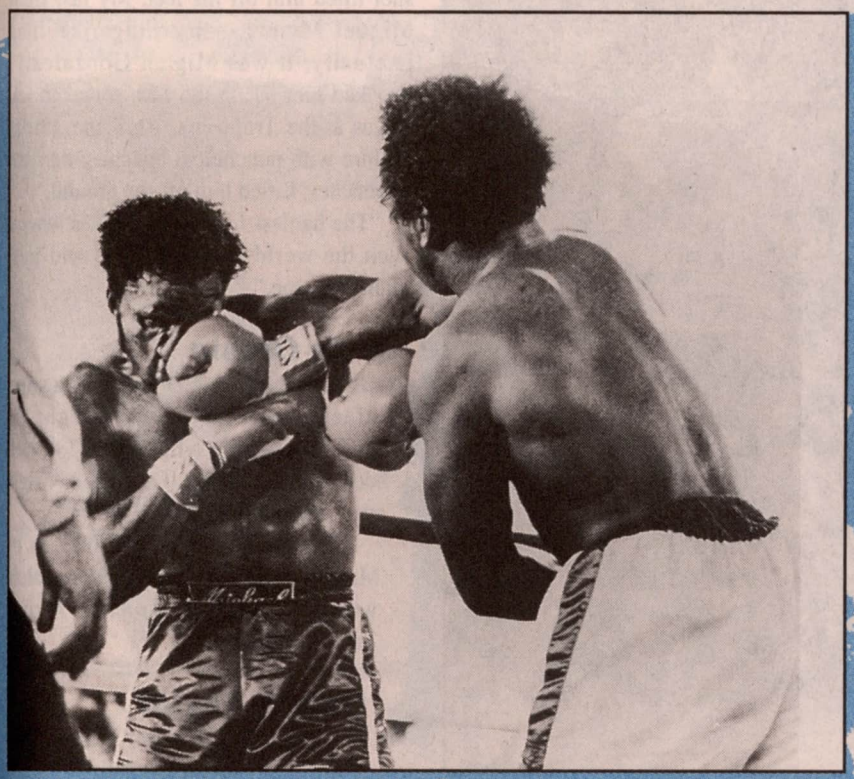
"[Sugar Ray] Robinson was a pretty good puncher. But the hardest I was ever hit was by Italo Scortichini, with his head [in their 1955 non-title fight]. The sonuvabitch butted me and I got five stitches out of it. I saw stars. And Tony DeMarco's left hook was a good one [in their second title fight in 1955]. That was right on the button."

Florentino Fernandez and Fullmer were in each other's faces

Tom Johnson

"Hardest punch was when I knocked out Claudio Martinet in the seventh round [in their 1996 title fight]. Right hand. I knew he wasn't gonna get up. I was just afraid that when he hit the canvas, the impact—he was totally unconscious. His legs went so limp. I didn't know if he was gonna be all right. I was very glad when he got up.

"Hardest I ever got hit was by Ever Beleno [in their 1996 title fight]. He hit me in the second round, a shot that took me a couple of rounds to recover. He was a southpaw, and it was a straight left. I was able to make all the necessary moves to get through it. It was the type of shot where you get hit on the side of the head and it knocks off your equilibrium. [Johnson went on to stop Beleno in round 12.]"



Dokes rearranged Mike Weaver's face

Michael Dokes

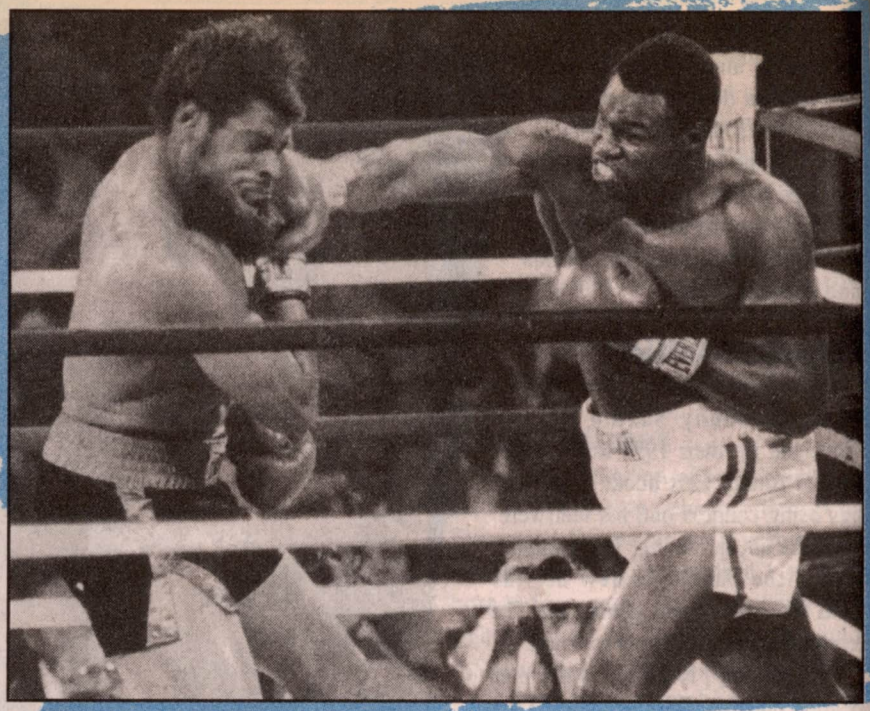
"The hardest I ever hit anybody with one punch—I'd have to sit back and evaluate that for a while. No one punch comes to mind.

"As for the hardest I've been hit, I'd have to say Mike Weaver. Our second fight [a 15-round title fight draw in 1983]. That's the one that comes to mind. You know what? I can go back even further than that. Earnie Shavers, when I sparred with him. Was it his right hand? He hit so hard, I don't remember."

Larry Holmes

"The hardest ... I guess Leon Spinks [in their 1981 title fight]. Right hand. That's all I got. I didn't like Leon, I was trying to hurt him. Then after I beat him up like that, I kinda felt bad about it. [Holmes kayoed Spinks in three rounds.]

"The hardest I ever got hit—Earnie Shavers [in their 1979 title fight]. I *still* feel it. When I think about the punch, I see a light flash, you know? Like when it's lightning out—bang! That's what I see. That was the hardest ever. That's the one I remember the most. Even when I fought [Mike] Tyson [in their 1988 title fight], he knocked me down three times. I didn't see no light, I didn't feel it. When Earnie hit me, I felt—zzzzz—up and down. That was it."

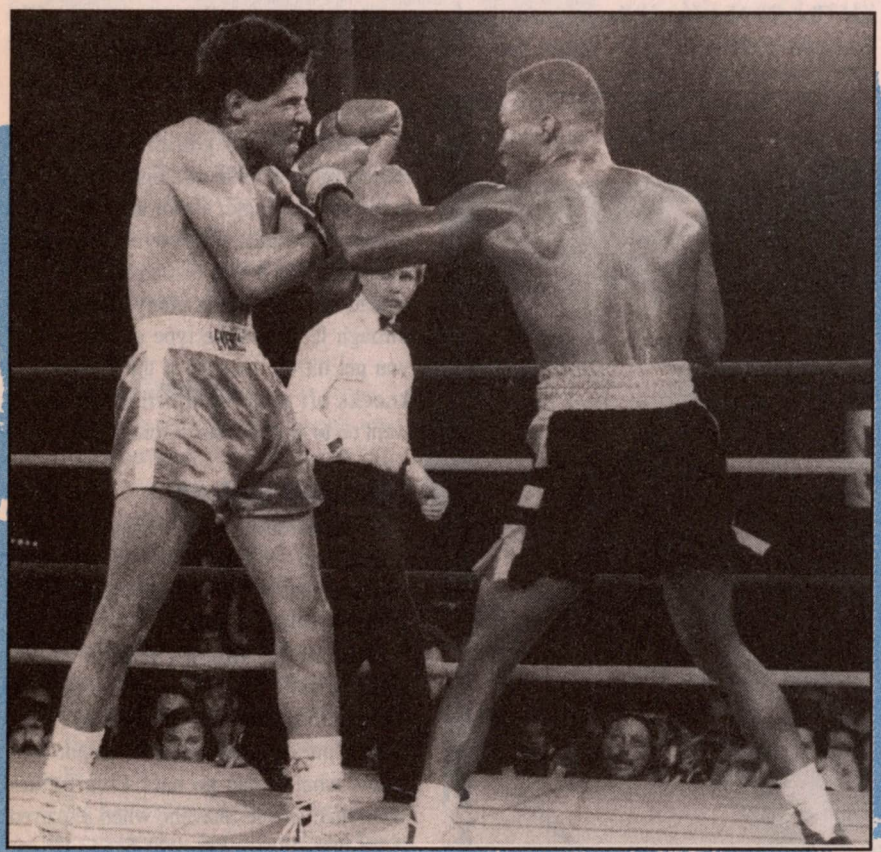


Holmes hit Leon Spinks hardest of all

Meldrick Taylor

"The hardest? That's a hard question. Maybe Cubanito Perez [in 1987]. A left hook to the body. I felt my hand sink in. [Taylor outpointed Perez over 10 rounds.]

"The hardest I've been hit? That's another hard question. I'd say [Julio Cesar] Chavez [in their 1990 title fight]. That last right hand. I didn't really know what happened. I didn't really see the punch. I got up ... it all happened so fast. [Chavez stopped Taylor in the 12th round.]"



Taylor was too strong and speedy for Cubanito Perez

Lonnie Smith

"The hardest I ever hit anyone with one shot lifted him off his feet. My last fight, Miguel Munoz, something like that. [Actually, it was Miguel Gonzalez.] I knocked him out in the fifth round in Las Vegas at the Tropicana, April the 23rd. I hit him with punches in bunches, bunches of punches. Lifted him off the ground.

"The hardest I ever got hit was when I won the world title [in 1985] and they didn't pay me."

Ossie Ocasio

"Hardest punch I landed was against Rafael Guerrero, a heavyweight [in Ocasio's second pro fight in 1976]. Left hook. Down and out. Out! I knew right away, right when I landed the punch.

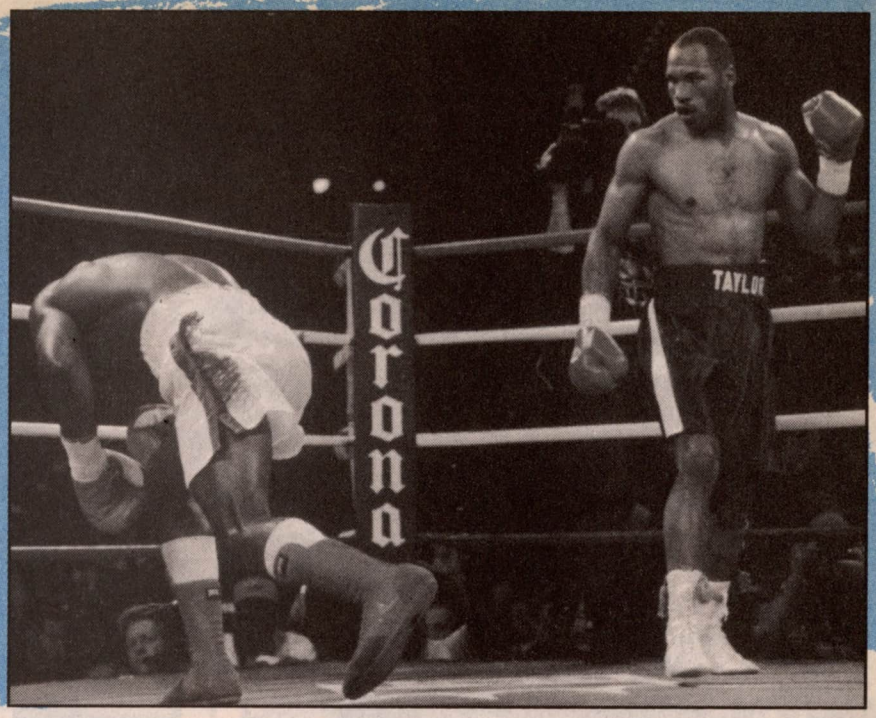
"The hardest I was ever hit was by Michael Dokes [in their 1980 rematch, won by Dokes in one round]. A right hand. I went down."

Quincy Taylor

"The hardest I ever hit anybody was Julian Jackson [in their 1995 title fight]. In the fifth round. A straight

left. [Taylor is a southpaw.] I thought I hit him so hard, I woke him up. I was scared. He didn't go down. He said, 'Is that the best you can do?' and I thought, *Wow, this guy can take a punch.* He scared me because normally if you hit a guy with a knockout punch that doesn't knock him out, you can wake him up with the same punch. I knew for sure that I hit him and he should've went. [Taylor went on to stop Jackson in round six.]

"Hardest I was ever hit was by James Kinchen in a sparring match. Bigger guy than me. He was at middleweight, I was at junior middleweight. We were wearing headgear. A right hand. That guy could punch. I remember thinking, *Man, if he hits me in the chin, he'll knock me out.* And that was with the big gloves!"



Taylor left Julian Jackson looking for the floor

Edwin Rosario

"Hardest was Livingstone Bramble [in their 1986 title fight]. Right hand."

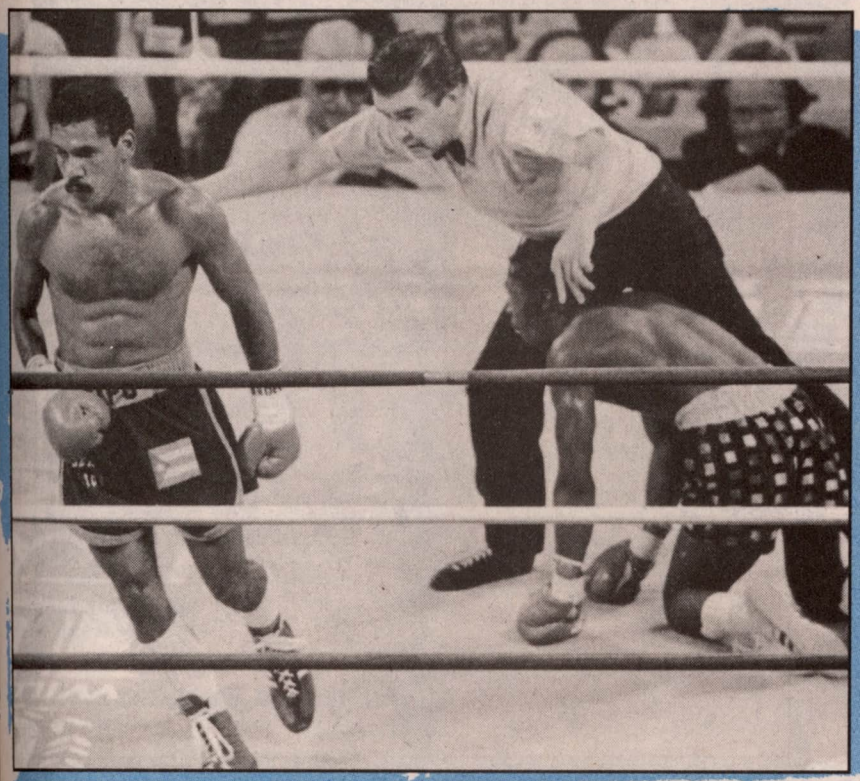
"Hardest punch to me? Nothing. Never. I never go to the floor. The hardest punch I took was from Javier Flores at 122 pounds [in 1980]. A right hand. [Rosario stopped Flores in round nine.]"

Saoul Mamby

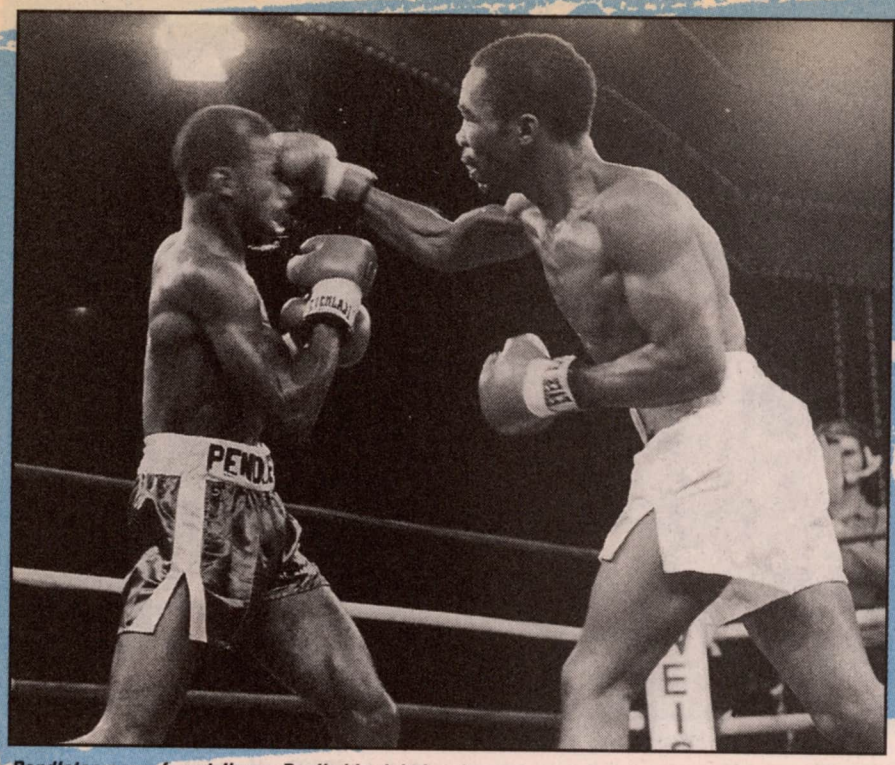
"In 81 fights, the hardest I ever hit anybody was Sang Hyun Kim [in their 1980 title fight]. It was a right hand in the fight I won the title. He went down and got up at the count of eight, drunk as hell, and [referee] Harry Gibbs had to stop the fight. It's funny, I was more of a left hooker, but it seemed everyone I hit with a right hand went down. There weren't many, but those that I did hit—*boom!* It surprised me.

"The hardest I've ever been hit wasn't [Roberto] Duran, wasn't [Saensak] Muangsurin, it was a guy named Thomas Americo from Indonesia [in their 1981 title fight]. I went over there and beat him. He was the strongest guy, even stronger than Duran. He wasn't as sharp as Duran, but he and Muangsurin were stronger than Duran. Fighting Thomas Americo was like fighting a middleweight. He was powerful. Both hands. I wore him down. Bodypunches took everything from him. [Mamby outpointed Americo over 15 rounds.] The best punch he had was his right hand. He hit me with a right hand and I saw three of him for about six, seven rounds.

"That's the only fight in my life I went back to the corner and prayed. I



Rosario was one of the few to drop Livingstone Bramble



Pendleton never forgot Jimmy Paul's big right hand

said, 'God, please don't let me leave my title in this godforsaken country.'"

Fred Pendleton

"Right hand. Tony Lopez [in 1995]. The punch was to the chin and his whole midsection shook and his body quaked. Great shot. He went down. You don't stand up when I hit you with a shot like that. That was the hardest I ever hit anybody and the most reaction I ever got out of somebody I hit. It didn't finish him, he got up. I felt that was awful stupid. He went down twice more till he got knocked out in the eighth.

"Not too many people hit me hard. Oh, yeah, I know. It was Jimmy Paul [in 1985]. He hit me with a shot on the side of the ear and I felt it in my toes. Nobody knew I went down from a shot. They thought it was a slip. When I got up I couldn't get my toes under me. That was definitely the hardest shot—Jimmy Paul's right hand. [Paul outpointed Pendleton over 10 rounds.]"

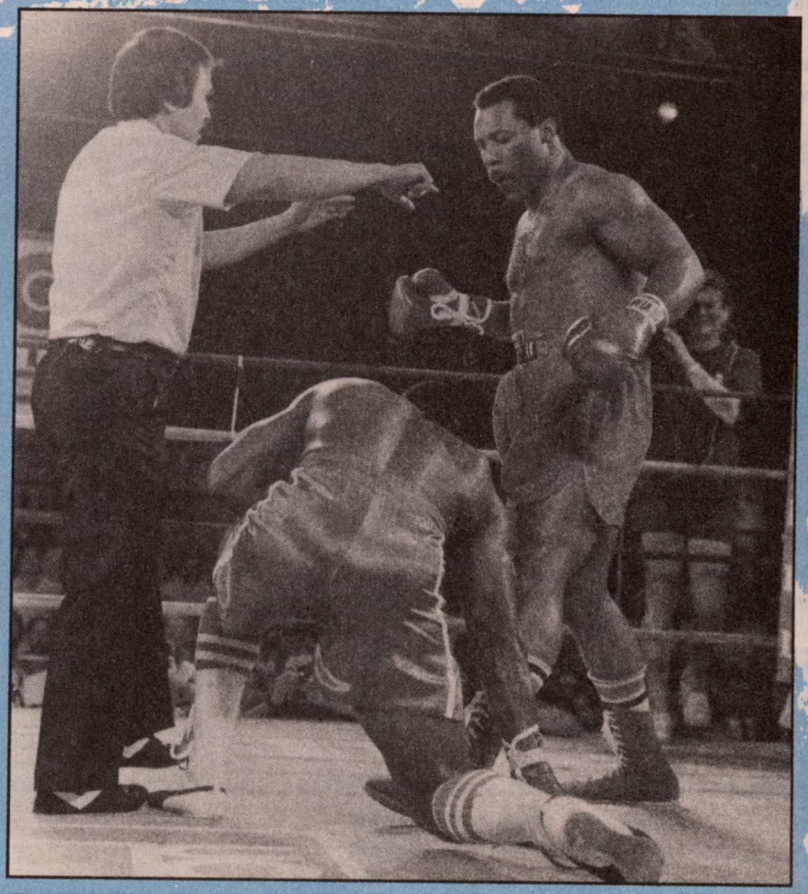
Pinklon Thomas

"Let's see. I don't know if it was the hardest, but the most effective punch and the one that looked the best was when I defended the title against Mike Weaver [in 1985]. I hit him with a good right hand. And in my 10th pro fight I fought a guy in Las Vegas at the Silver Slipper, Leroy Caldwell. I hit him with a right hand [in round 10] and they said I'd never throw it again. The janitor just came and swept him up.

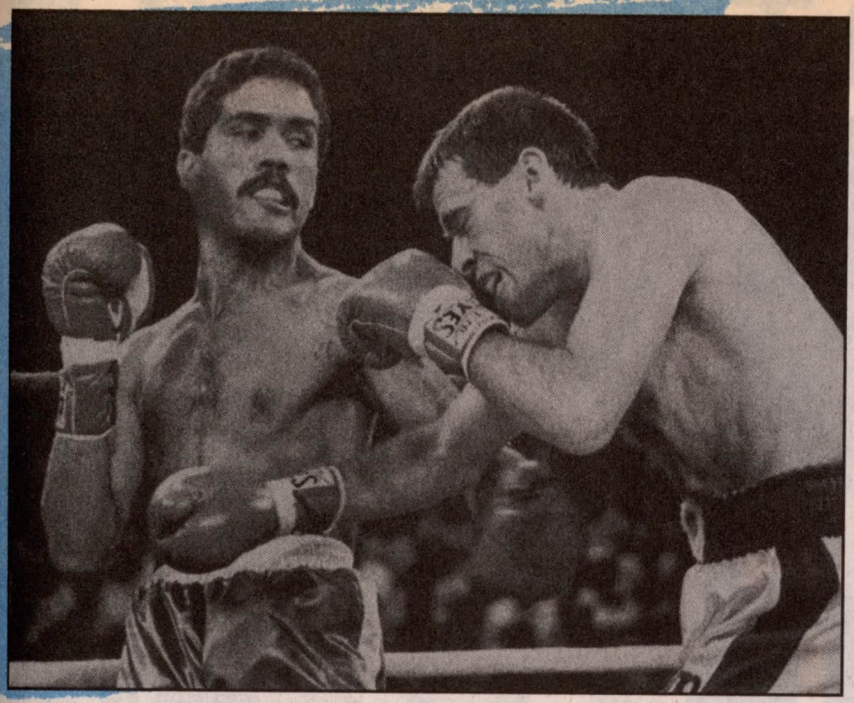
"One single punch, again, I would have to say when Mike Weaver hit me. I guess that's why I had to get him back. A good left hook. He hit me and I pushed him almost across the ring. I didn't go down, I was in great shape then. But it was a big shot. That left hook was the shot I talked about when they made a video on Angelo Dundee's champions [of which Thomas was one]."

Victor Callejas

"The hardest punch was against Loris Stecca with the left hook [in



Pinky used his whole hand to down Mike Weaver



Callejas (left) and Loris Stecca engaged in a pair of wars

their 1985 title fight rematch]. I broke his jaw and he was counted out. That was the most exciting knockout of the year.

"The hardest I was hit was the same fighter, the same fight. Stecca. I stumbled, but I didn't go down."

Frankie Randall

"The hardest I hit anybody was Sammy Fuentes in 1986. I hit him with a right hand and spun him around. I knew it was over. I felt it down my shoulder and all the way to my legs. I knew it was a solid shot. I knocked him out [in the second round].

"The hardest one shot I got hit with was thrown by Edwin Rosario, back in 1985, Father's Day in London, England. [Rosario edged Randall by 10-round decision.] The hardest I ever got hit in my life. It was a right hand. He didn't knock me down or nothing, but it was definitely the hardest shot."

Vincent Pettway

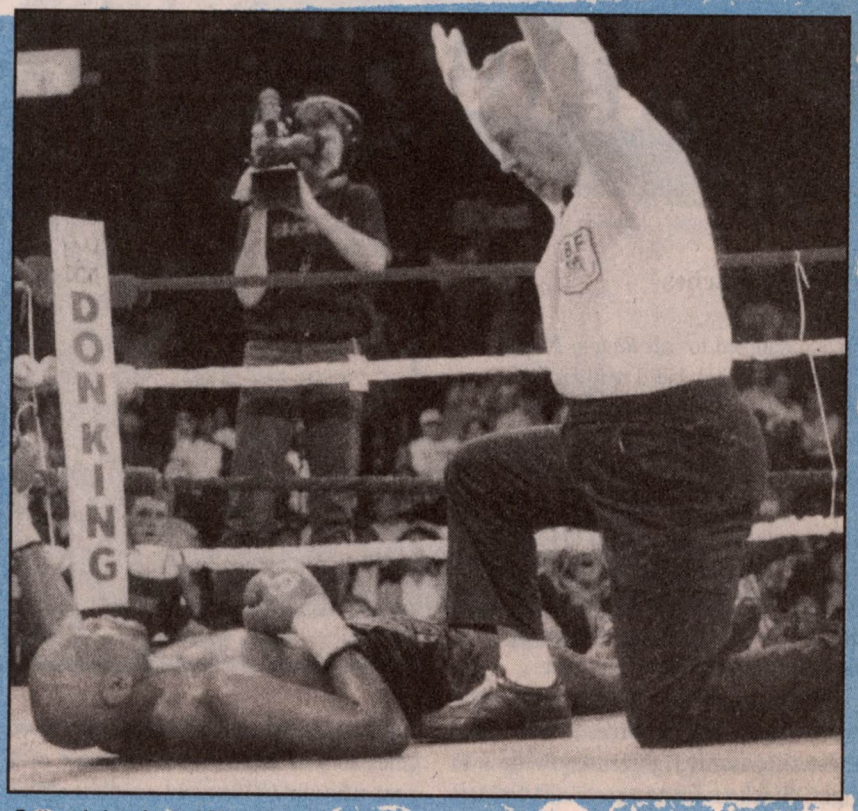
"The hardest shot was Simon Brown [in their 1995 title fight]. The left hook when he went down and out for the count. It was a very loose and relaxed punch. It was correctly thrown. I didn't think I had gotten everything into it, but when I looked back at the tape, I had the correct alignment, my weight was perfectly distributed, and I had pinpoint accuracy. As a result, he went out.

"The hardest punch I got hit? I'm trying to remember that ... I got hit by Agustin Caballero [in 1989]. A straight right hand over my jab. The fourth round. The reason that was so hard was that I had broken my foot in the first round, and he hit me with a shot, and I remember I was trying to feel for my feet, but I couldn't feel them underneath me and I hit the floor. I just laid there and told my coach I was okay, but I had to be carried from the ring because I couldn't stand on my foot. [The fight was ruled a four-round no-contest.]"

Gianfranco Rosi

"The hardest punch was against Gilbert Baptist [in their 1991 title fight]. He didn't go down, but after that, the match was over, even though Baptist went the distance. [Rosi won via 12-round decision.]

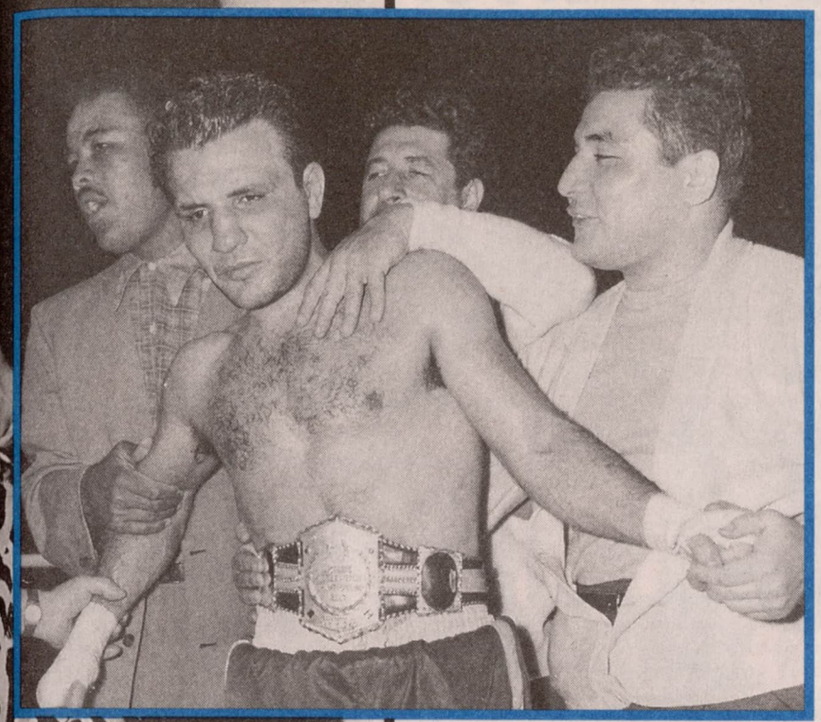
"The first person that hit me the hardest was Lloyd Honeyghan in a fight for the European [welterweight] championship [in 1985, a bout won by Honeyghan in the third round]. After that, it was Vincent Pettway [in their 1994 title fight rematch]." ■

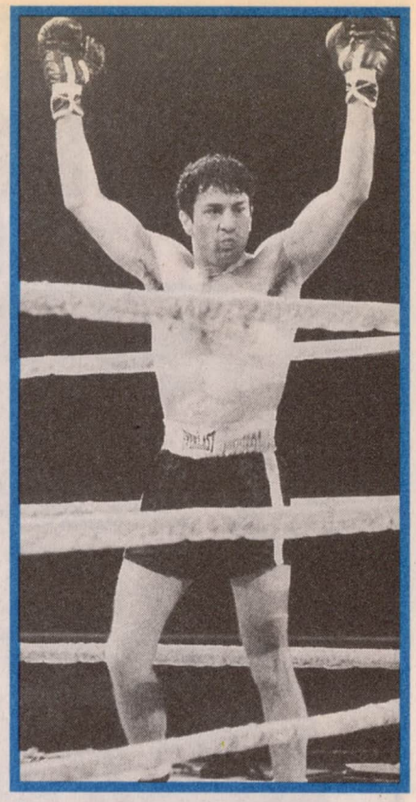


Pettway's knockout of Simon Brown was particularly scary

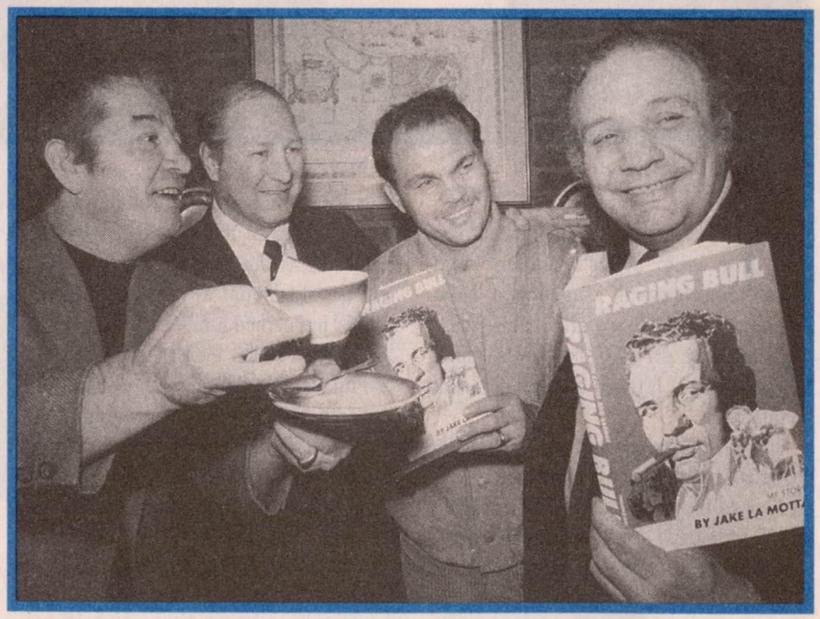
Fighters As Writers

WHY JAKE LaMOTTA IS STILL ALL THE RAGE





The real-life LaMotta following his come-from-behind kayo of Laurent Dauthuille in 1950 (left). LaMotta is congratulated by (from left) Joe Louis, trainer Al Silvani, and brother Joey. LaMotta as portrayed by Robert DeNiro in Raging Bull *(above).*



Fighter turned writer: At a book-signing party in 1970, LaMotta is flanked by (from left) fellow author Rocky Graziano, Billy Graham, and Carlos Ortiz.

By Nick Tosches

I am tempted to call *Raging Bull* a classic of its kind, but it really has no kind. Yes, it is a boxing book, but it is so much else, too: an anomaly of boxing literature, unique and out of time.

One of my buddies from the old days, the failed owner of a down-the-drain joint in Greenwich Village, used to say, "The next time I open a bar, I'm gonna have writers who can write and fighters who can fight." A time-worn but venerable complaint.

While it is not true that most successful writers know how to write, it is true that most successful fighters know how to fight. But how many successful fighters can write? Marianne Moore's praise for the doggerel of Muhammad Ali can be viewed charitably as the autumnal whimsy of a poet who, in 1919, early supporter Ezra Pound called "almost unintelligible," or, less charitably, as a genial bit of intellectual slumming, a precursor in a way to the far more fatuous such slummings of, say, Joyce Carol Oates.

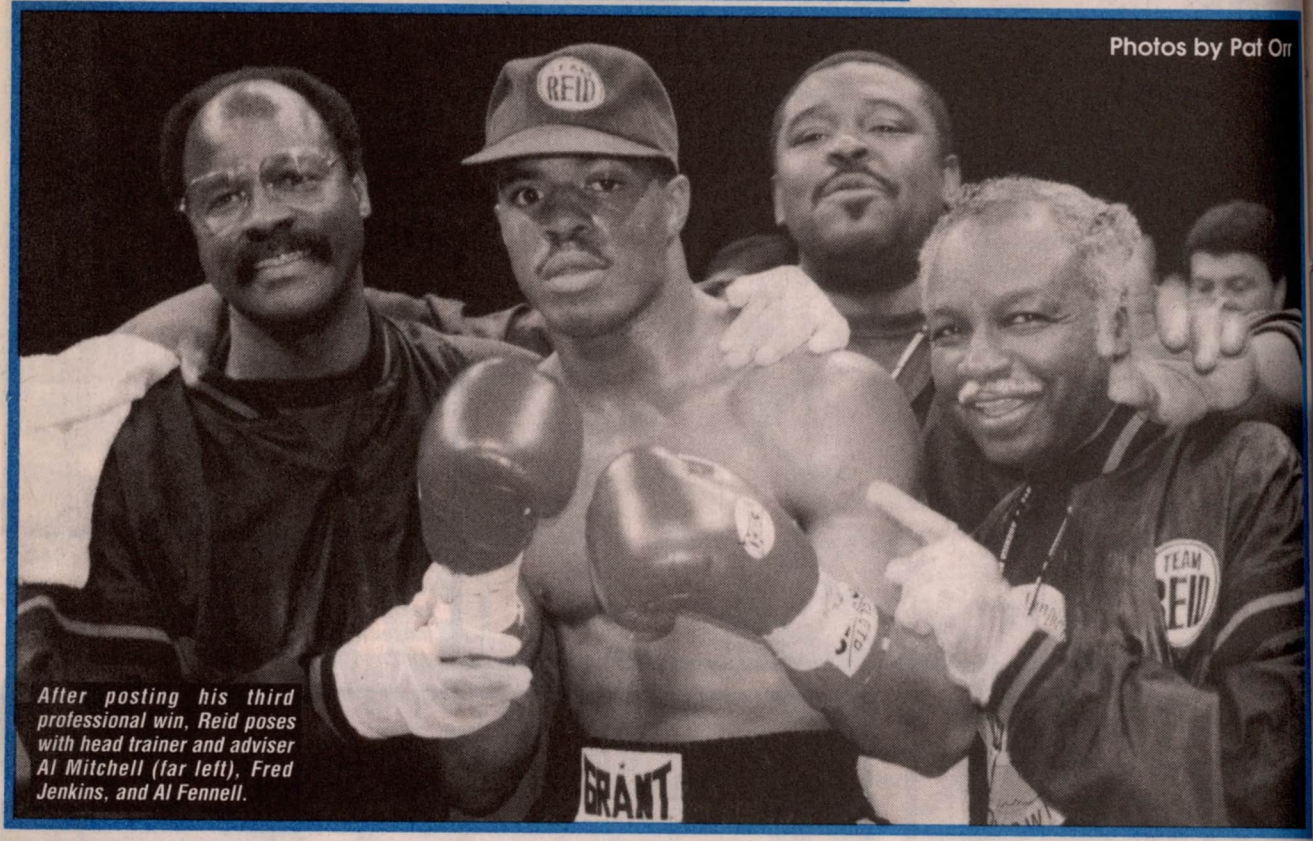
No, it can be said in truth and with confidence that fighters write even worse than writers. In all fairness, however, it should be said that fighters generally write no worse than writers fight. Imagine, if you can, the farcical spectacle, blind leading blind—rather, charlatan leading chump—of the boxing lessons our man Ezra Pound received in Paris in 1922 from another of his proteges, the great pretender Hemingway. One gropes for a fanciful par-

(Continued on page 72)

The Golden Road To Stardom

IT'S GETTING EASIER FOR DAVID REID

Fourth In A Series



Photos by Pat Orr

After posting his third professional win, Reid poses with head trainer and adviser Al Mitchell (far left), Fred Jenkins, and Al Fennell.

By Nigel Collins

David Reid comes ambling through the lobby of his apartment building, throwing exaggerated, slow-motion punches, a loopy grin on his face.

"I'm gonna get you," he growls, failing hopelessly in a feigned attempt to sound belligerent.

The craggy-faced doorman accepts the challenge, shuffles out from behind a desk, and cocks his gnarled fists. The unlikely pair pantomimes a few punches and then dissolves into laughter. Reid's boyish charm is almost as potent as his fists, and the elderly doorman is obviously under its spell. "This guy's gonna be a great fighter," he says just before the elevator door closes, and Reid and his visitor descend to the underground parking garage, where the fighter's burgundy Lexus is waiting to whisk him off to the bank.

"I know I put that check somewhere," says Reid, rummaging through the glove box in search of the most recent dividend his status as the lone American boxer to win a gold medal at the 1996 Olympic Games has earned him.

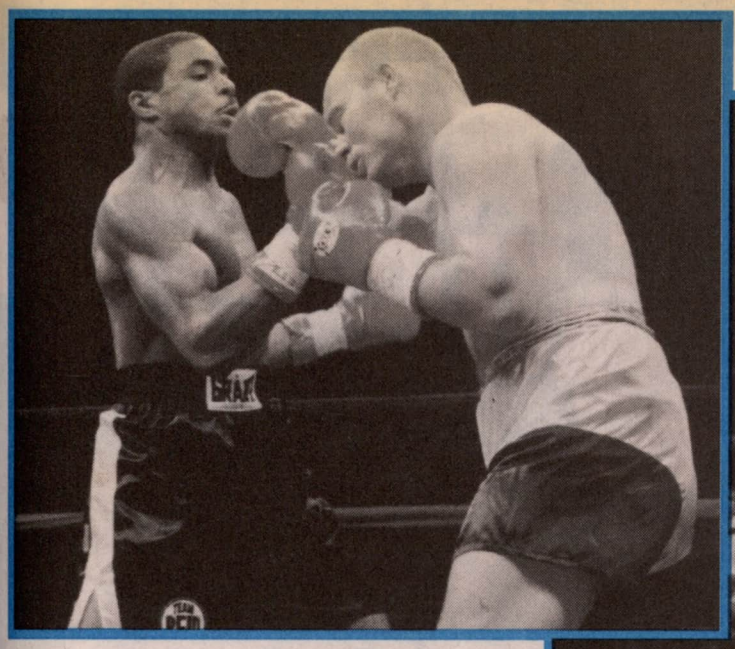
As Reid steers the car through a maze of Philadelphia traffic, conversation turns to Mike Tyson and the infamous biting incident. Like everybody else, Reid is perplexed. He's been a Tyson fan ever since "Iron Mike" beat Tyrell Biggs in 1987, and theorizes that part of Tyson's problem is his inability to put the first loss to Evander Holyfield behind him. To a degree, it's a predicament that Reid can empathize with.

"It's like when I got dropped in the gym recently," he says. "My sparring partner caught me with a bodyshot. *Boom!* Suddenly, I'm down. I know he's gonna be going all around telling people he dropped the Olympic gold medalist, but I've just got to forget it and go on. Everybody gets dropped sometime or another, and if I'm going to get dropped, I'm glad it happens in the gym. That's where you're supposed to make your mistakes."

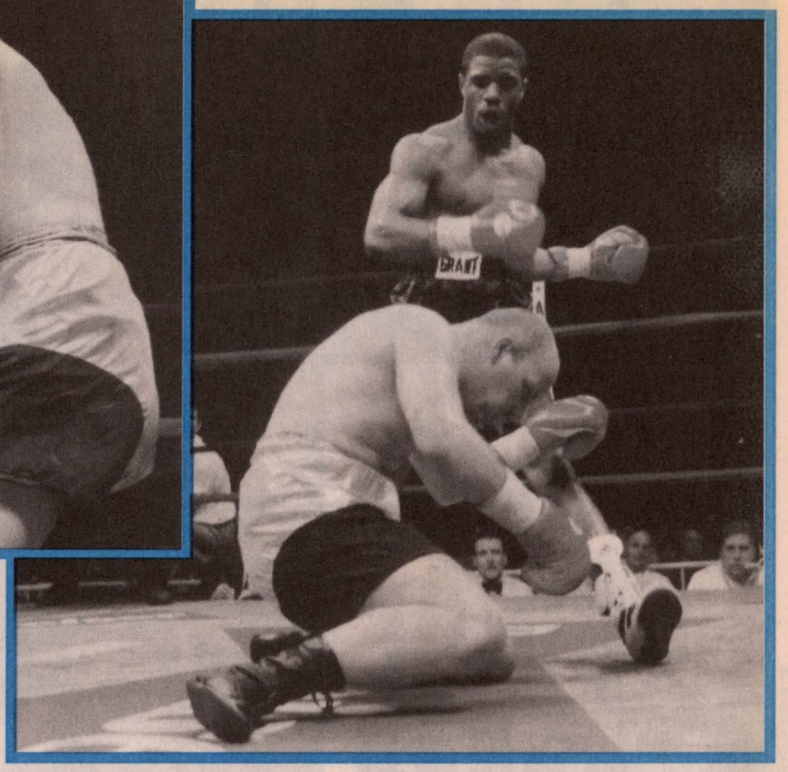
Fortunately for Reid, nothing anywhere near as untoward has occurred in his three professional fights. In fact, things have gotten easier with each bout. That probably has something to do with the decreasing quality of his opposition, but having gotten back into a fighting groove after a seven-month layoff, necessitated by eye surgery, is also a major factor.

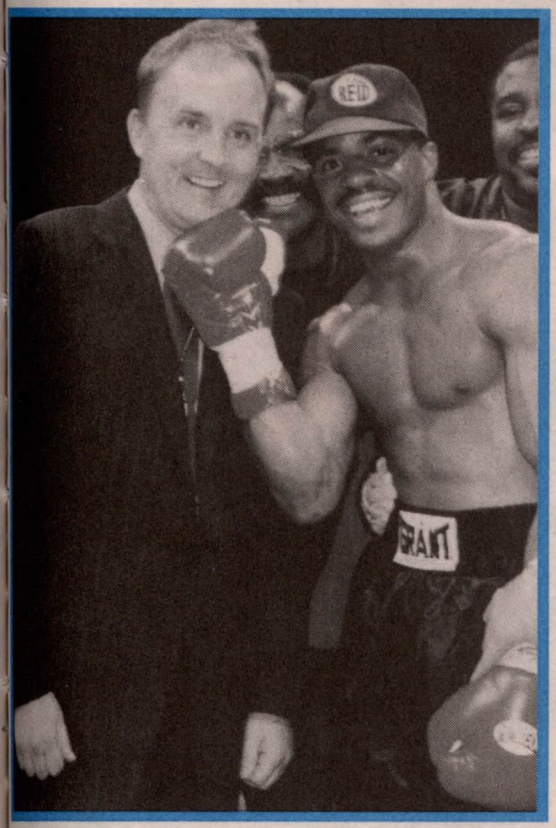
A detailed account of his pro debut, a six-round unanimous decision over Sam Calderon on March 21 in Atlantic City, was featured in the July 1997 issue of THE RING. Since then, Reid has stopped Robert Koon in six rounds on May 24 and John Long in two rounds on June 21.

Back at his high-rise apartment, Reid



Reid's second kayo victim was John Long of St. Louis, who tasted the Olympic gold medalist's destructive right hand (left) before falling in round two (below).





Mat Tinley, who heads America Presents, has invested heavily in Reid. In addition to the 1996 Olympian, America Presents promotes Bernard Hopkins, William Guthrie, Wayne McCullough, Michael Nunn, Rafael and Gabe Ruelas, and several others.

sprawls on the living room couch, wielding a remote control. A tape of the Koon fight is playing, and one can't help but notice that despite his blinding hand speed, Reid is missing with an inordinate number of punches. When he does connect, instead of following up, he usually backs away.

"You know what? I don't know why I did that," says Reid. "I should have stayed. It was probably instinct. I wanted to see if he was going to throw a wild punch afterward."

Later, when Reid misses all six punches of a rapid-fire combination, he mutters, "settle down, settle down," giving his on-screen image the sort of advice his trainer, Al Mitchell, undoubtedly imparted during the fight. Talent-wise, Koon, 13-2 (4), obviously isn't in Reid's league, but he's rawhide tough, throws his punches with conviction, and obviously hasn't traveled all the way from Birmingham, Alabama, just to pick up a payday. He's come to win.

"He had a little power," concedes Reid. "He caught me a couple of times."

After five rounds, it looks as if Reid's failure to stick with his heavy-duty body attack will cost him a knockout victory. Another points win would be okay, but not exactly what the occasion calls for. When your nickname is "The American Dream," people expect fireworks.

Reid comes out for the sixth and final round determined to provide the sort of conclusion worthy of a high-profile prospect. He stuns Koon with a right, drives him into the ropes, and moves in for the finish. Referee Novar Garcia interrupts Reid's followup barrage and gives Koon a standing eight-count. A few shots after the action resumes, Garcia stops the fight at the 1:25 mark, saving Koon from unnecessary punishment and awarding Reid his first professional knockout.

"Oh, man, I felt good," says Reid. "I was so happy. The Calderon fight, I didn't get the knockout. I was really stretchin' for this one."

Stopping his opponent wasn't the only difference between Reid's first and second pro bouts. Although you wouldn't have guessed it from his sunny disposition at the time, Reid had felt the pressure of being a high-priced prospect turning pro on HBO.

"Everybody wanted to see what The American Dream could do," says Reid, recalling the hoopla surrounding his debut. "Can he fight? Is he worth his contract? What type of style does he have? Does he

(Continued on page 76)

THE CROWNING of TIMMY AUSTIN

A Title As Good As Gold

By Robert Mladinich

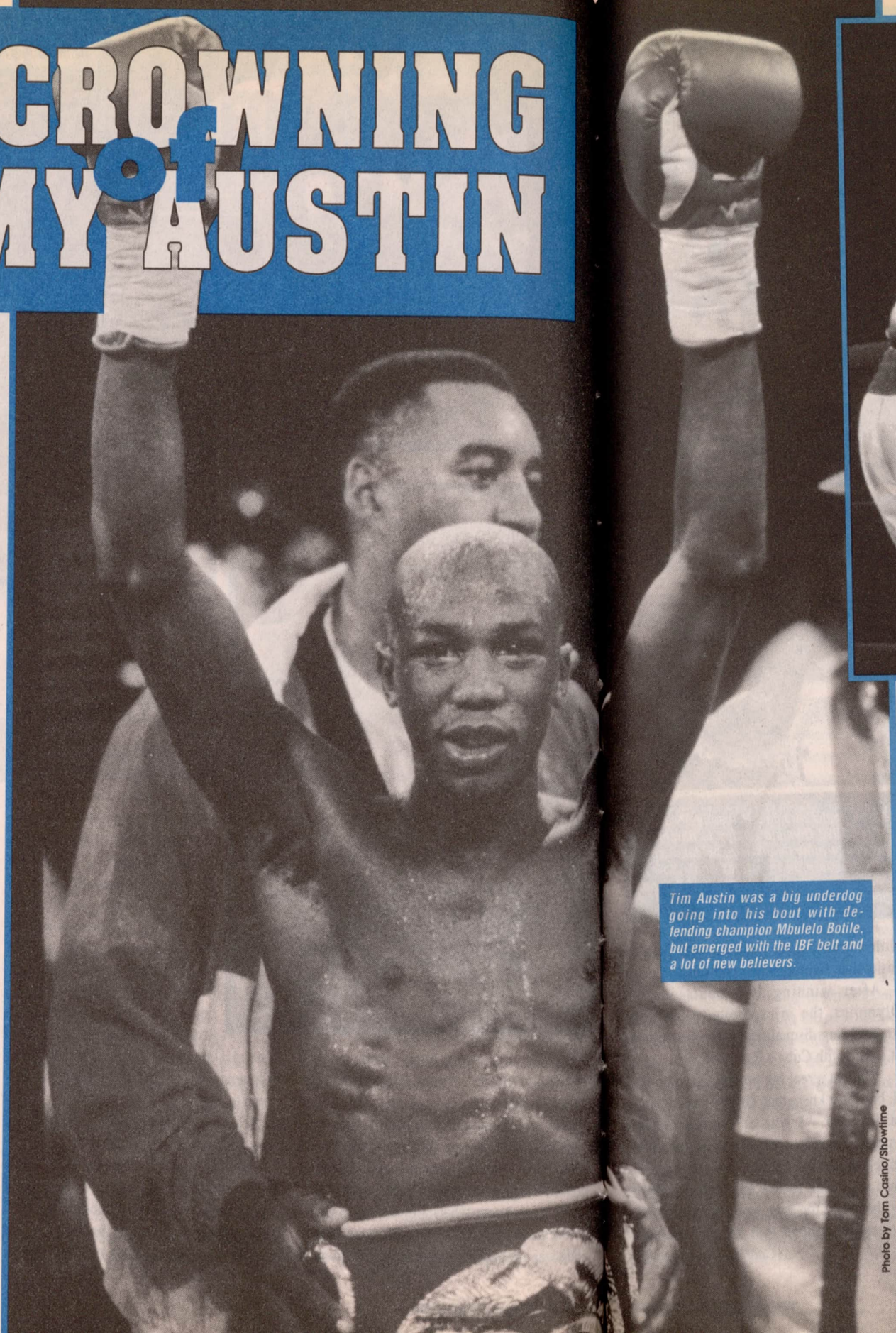
WHEN TIM "The Cincinnati Kid" Austin was presented with the opportunity to challenge IBF bantamweight champion Mbulelo Botile of South Africa on July 19, in Nashville, Tennessee, he eagerly accepted the challenge, even though, on paper at least, it looked like a no-win situation. Although southpaw Austin was a bronze medalist at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, most people did not expect him to beat as dominant a champion as Botile. It was the challenger's first fight in 17 months, and during that time he had been besieged with a host of physical, managerial, and domestic problems. Although his record stood at 15-0-1 (14) going into the fight, he had not fought anyone of note, nor anyone that posed much of a challenge.

Botile, on the other hand, was also undefeated, and making his sixth title defense. He had a history of beating southpaws easily, having knocked out two of them in his previous seven fights. Botile is a very powerful, extremely busy competitor who gives no quarter, and expects none in return. His eyes are like those of a world-class poker player; they never offer an iota of a glimpse into what he is thinking or feeling. He had never been down in his entire career, including 85 amateur fights, and was regarded as a fine champion who had yet to display the best of himself.

Near the end of the first round, Botile hit Austin with left hook that had a whiplash effect. Almost immediately, the right side of Austin's jaw started to swell and his mouth started to bleed. In the second round, Botile moved in for the kill with the calculated aplomb of a savvy assassin. His face was filled with a cold impassion, and it seemed as if he would soon overwhelm Austin and send him to the same scrap heap of anonymity on which so many other former Olympians have found themselves.

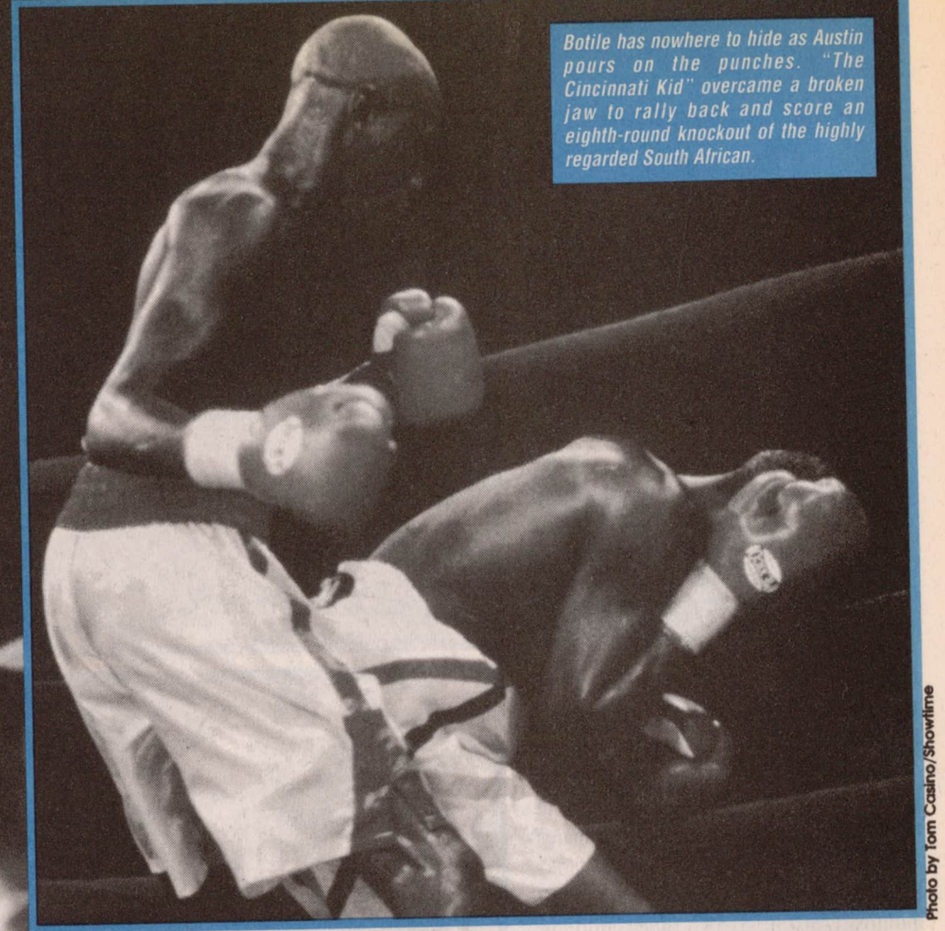
Botile is an expert at picking his opponents apart, and Austin found himself under deadly fire with no place to run. His jaw continued to swell, resembling that of a squirrel who had filled his mouth with nuts in anticipation of a long, cold winter. Austin seemed to be preparing himself, symbolically at least, for an equally long night, one that would probably cost him his undefeated record. To most observers he looked like a man immersed in quicksand. It is now obvious, however, that those observers knew little about Austin, and absolutely nothing about his fierce competitive spirit and tremendous will to win.

Displaying an incredible degree of physical and emotional fortitude, Austin weathered the onslaught, as well as a few more tough rounds, knocked Botile down in the seventh round, and knocked him out at 2:20 of the eighth round with a brutal right hook. As several of his five brothers and sisters entered the ring to congratulate him with hugs and kisses, his face recoiled in agony. Before the new champ had time



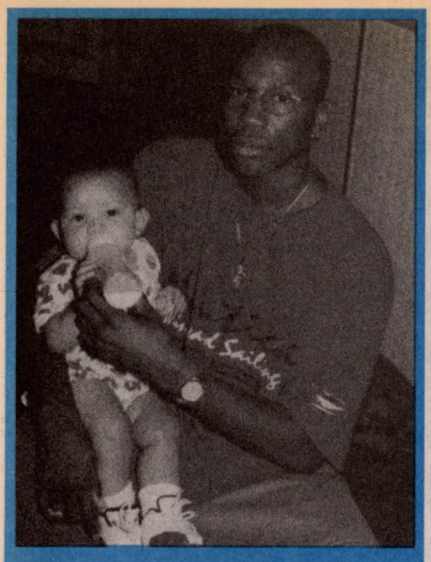
Tim Austin was a big underdog going into his bout with defending champion Mbulelo Botile, but emerged with the IBF belt and a lot of new believers.

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime



Botile has nowhere to hide as Austin pours on the punches. "The Cincinnati Kid" overcame a broken jaw to rally back and score an eighth-round knockout of the highly regarded South African.

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime



Family and friends are extremely important to Austin, who is pictured feeding his daughter, Naya (above). A large contingent of hometown fans traveled from Cincinnati to Nashville for the Botile fight (right).

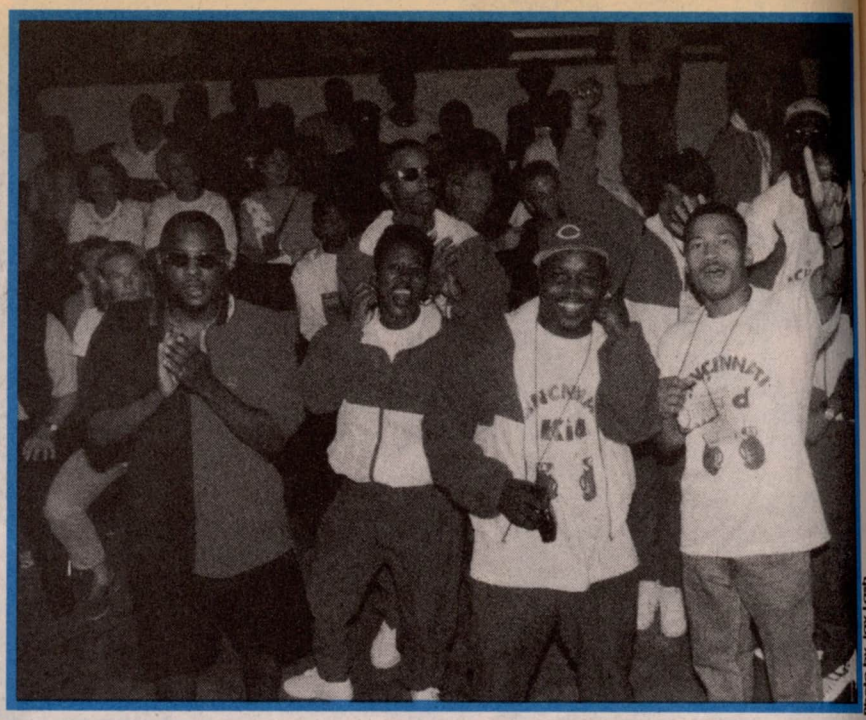
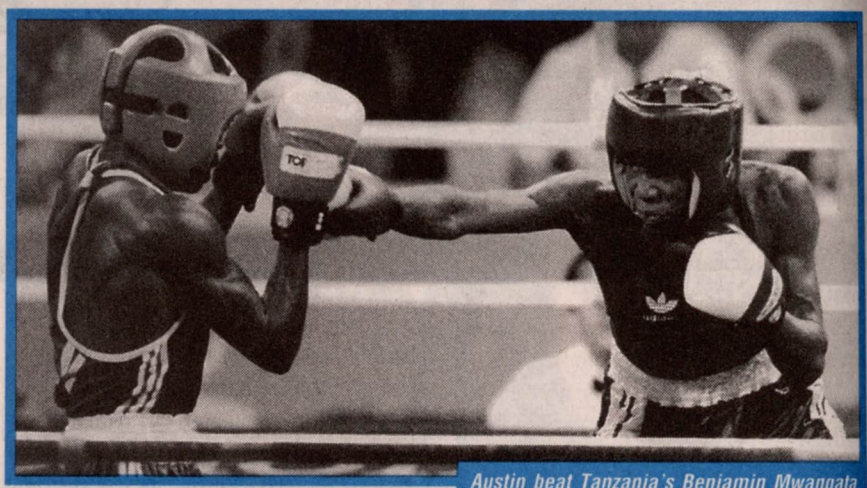


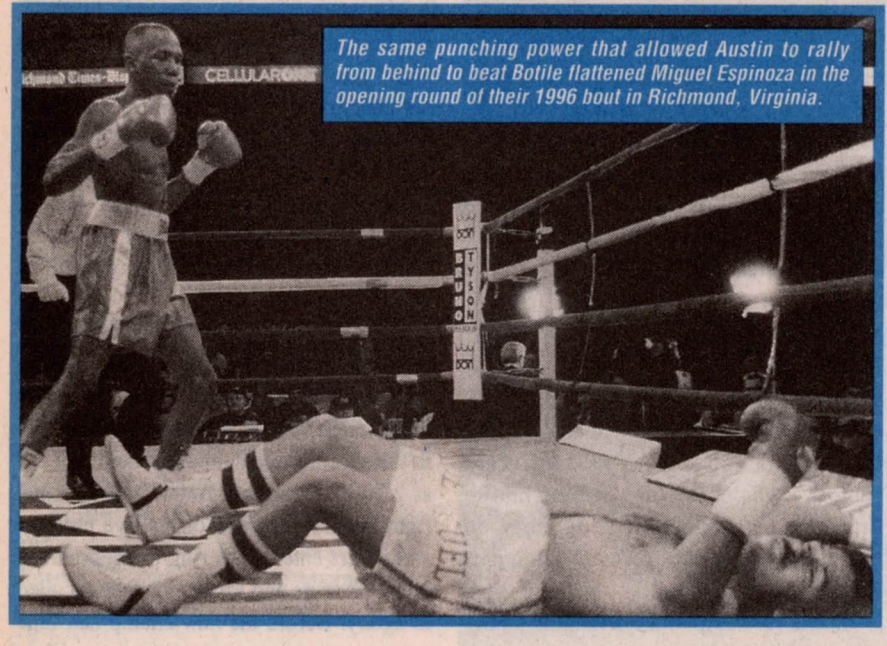
Photo by Joy Loah

to revel in his victory, he was transported to a nearby hospital where he spent 20 hours having his broken jaw wired shut.

"Those type of things come with the game," Austin said a few weeks later from the home in Fort Lauderdale that he shares with his fiancee, Denise Carey, a bookkeeper, and their daughter Naya, 20 months. (Austin has two other children, Tamika, 8, and Tyler, 3, from a previous relationship.) "Actually, I've had worse injuries than that. I had to fight with one eye after being thumbed in the Olympics, and lost my opportunity to win a gold medal. That's much harder than fighting with a broken jaw. Fighting with pain is easier than fighting when you can't see."



Austin beat Tanzania's Benjamin Mwangata at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, but had to settle for a bronze medal when he was disqualified in a later bout. Now he says that winning the IBF title has compensated for his Olympic disappointment.



The same punching power that allowed Austin to rally from behind to beat Botile flattened Miguel Espinoza in the opening round of their 1996 bout in Richmond, Virginia.

After winning two bouts in the Olympics, the injured eye resulted in Austin being disqualified in the first round of a bout with Cuba's Raul Gonzalez.

"I'm not a real big boxing fan in general, but I just knew that Timmy would win," said Carey. "I was at a huge family reunion, and we were watching the fight on television. My family was going crazy, but I was calm. I knew that he had worked too hard and too long to be denied. When it was announced that he was the new

(Continued on page 77)

THE 10 DIRTIEST FIGHTS OF ALL-TIME

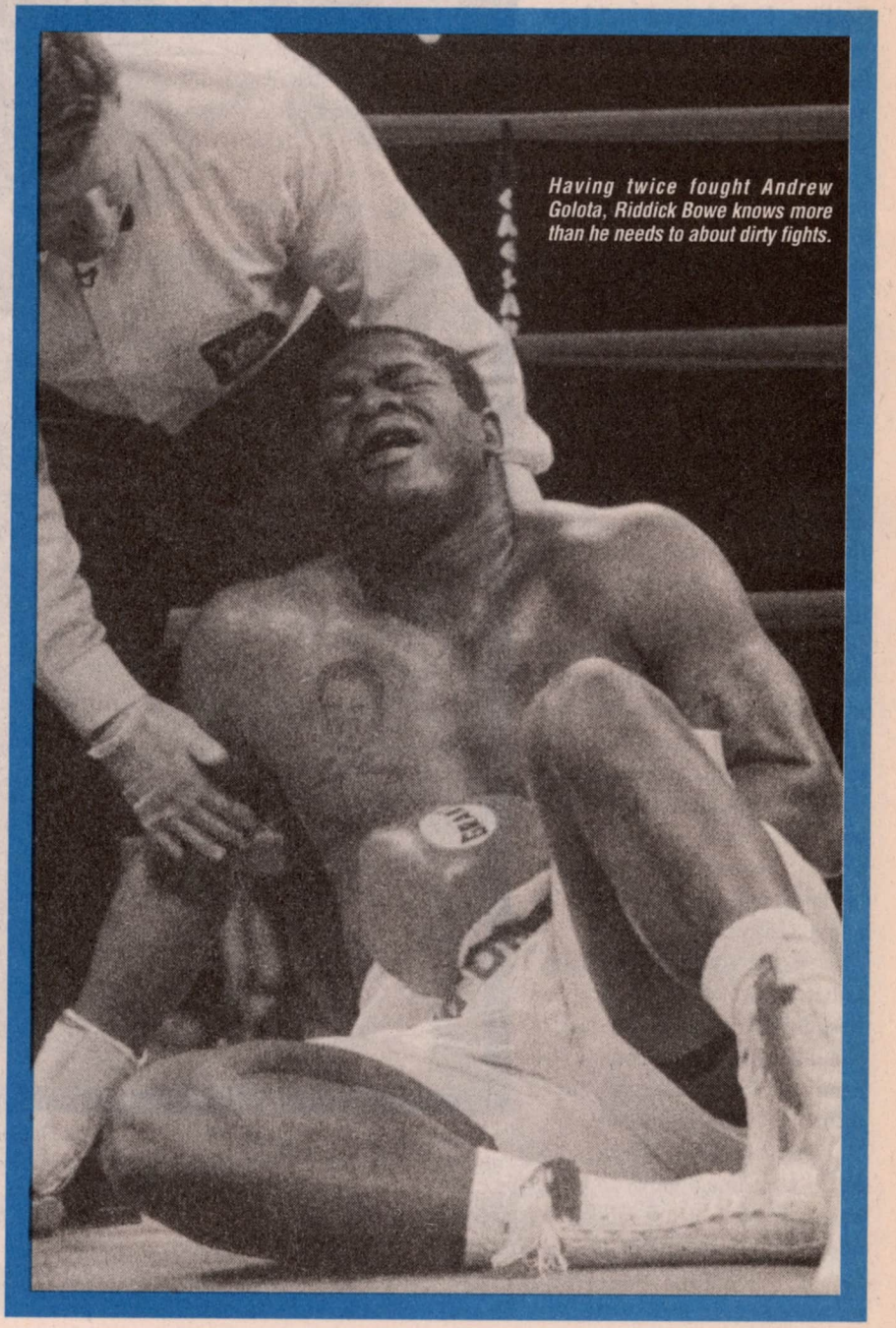
Compiled by Mike Silver
With contribution from Paul Lancetta

The bare-knuckle era was, for almost 200 years, governed by the London Prize Ring Rules. Among the forbidden fouls were butting, gouging, hair-pulling, and spiking (the bouts were contested on turf). Adherence to the London Rules varied widely. Enforcement was inconsistent, with gouging and spiking common occurrences. Many of the bare-knuckle breed solved the hair-pulling problem by shaving their heads.

As boxing slowly evolved into its modern form, new customs became new rules. The Marquis of Queensberry eventually codified the refinements that were already taking place in professional boxing in the late-19th century.

There is no question that the new rules gave the sport a more civilized veneer. But it was the great bare-knuckle heavyweight champion, John L. Sullivan, who was mostly responsible for speeding up the acceptance of the Queensberry rules and gloved fighting. While still champion, this most popular of American pugilists made the following announcement: "The London Rules allow too much leeway for the rowdy element to indulge their practices. Such mean tricks as spiking, biting, gouging, concealing snuff in one's mouth to blind an opponent, strangling, butting with the head, falling down without being struck, scratching with the nails, kicking, falling on an antagonist with the knees, the using of stones and resin, are impossible under the Queensberry rules. Fighting under the new rules before gentlemen is a pleasure."

The vast majority of professional fighters adhere to the rules. Fortunately, only a comparatively few major prize fights have involved the sort of despicable behavior that merits of a place of (dis)honor among the 10 dirtiest fights of all-time.



Having twice fought Andrew Golota, Riddick Bowe knows more than he needs to about dirty fights.

Luis Resto No-Decision 10 Billy Collins Jr., June 16, 1983; New York City; Junior Middleweights

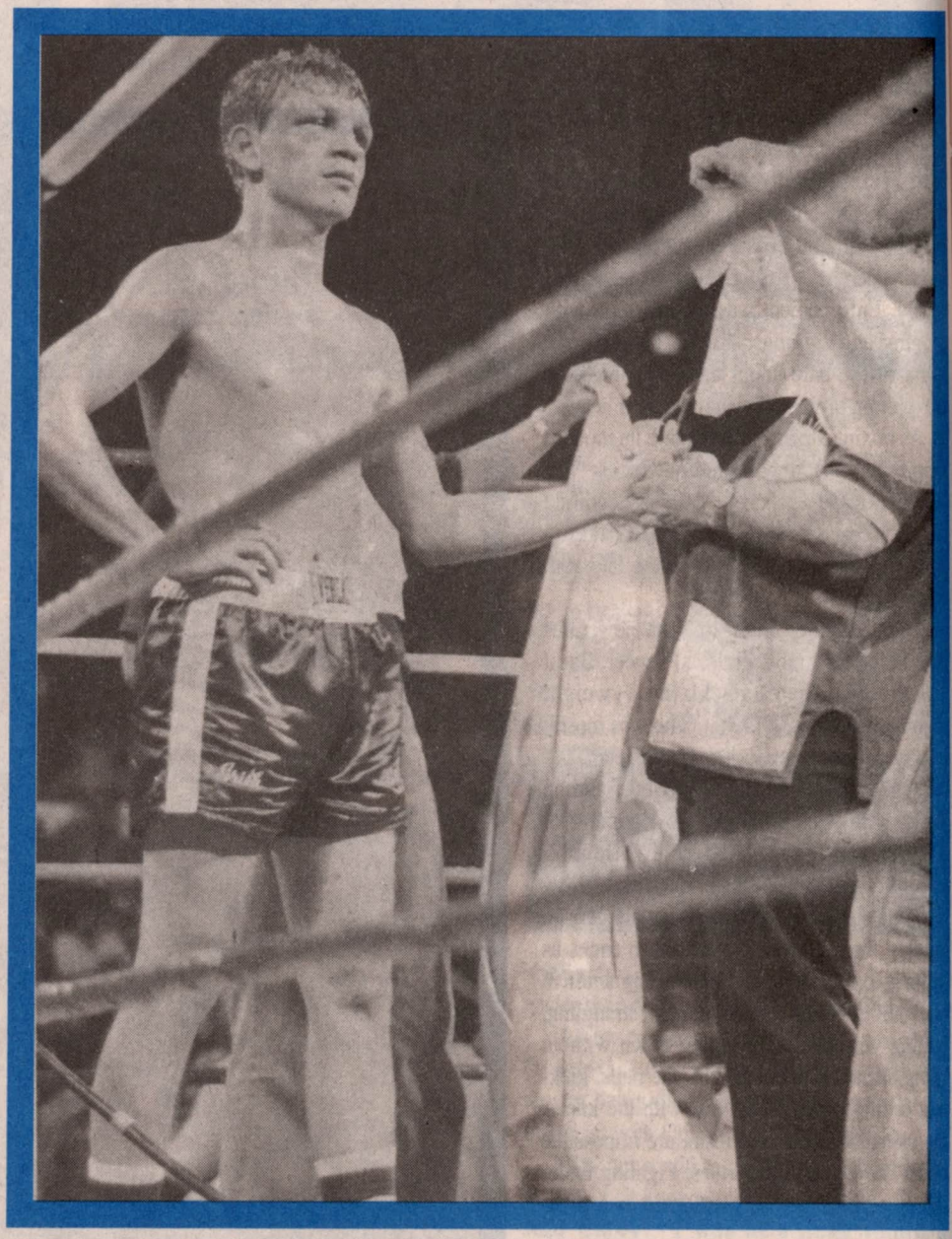
This one is still hard to write about.

The future looked bright for Collins. Undefeated in 13 pro bouts and under contract to Top Rank, the young welterweight was making his Madison Square Garden debut underneath Roberto Duran-Davey Moore. He was favored to defeat Resto, a rugged former New York Golden Gloves champion.

Resto's trainer, Panama Lewis, had other ideas. While waiting to be called into the ring, Lewis took Resto into a bathroom stall and surreptitiously made a small incision into each boxing glove. Then, using a tweezer, he extracted several ounces of protective padding from Resto's gloves. Commission officials, lax in their duty, did not detect the crime.

Without the normal protective padding, Resto's taped fists did tremendous damage to Collins' face and eyes. From the sixth round on, Collins had trouble seeing Resto. By the end of the fight, his eyes were swollen shut. Collins' fighting heart carried him to the finish, but he lost the 10-round decision.

Sensing foul play, Collins' father, a former fighter, grabbed Resto's gloves and felt the lack of padding. The boxing commission confiscated the gloves and turned them over to the State Police.



After absorbing what were virtually bare-fisted punches, Collins shows the wounds of war. He never recovered from the decision defeat, and never fought again.

After a trial, both Lewis and Resto were found guilty of criminal possession of a weapon, conspiracy, and tampering with a sports contest. Lewis was sentenced to six years in prison and Resto three. Both were banned from boxing for life.

Epilogue: The damage to Collins' eyes was permanent; to box again would risk blindness. Devastated and depressed, Collins took to drinking, and his marriage deteriorated. Less than two years after the fight, in what may have been a suicide, he drove his car off a cliff and was killed.

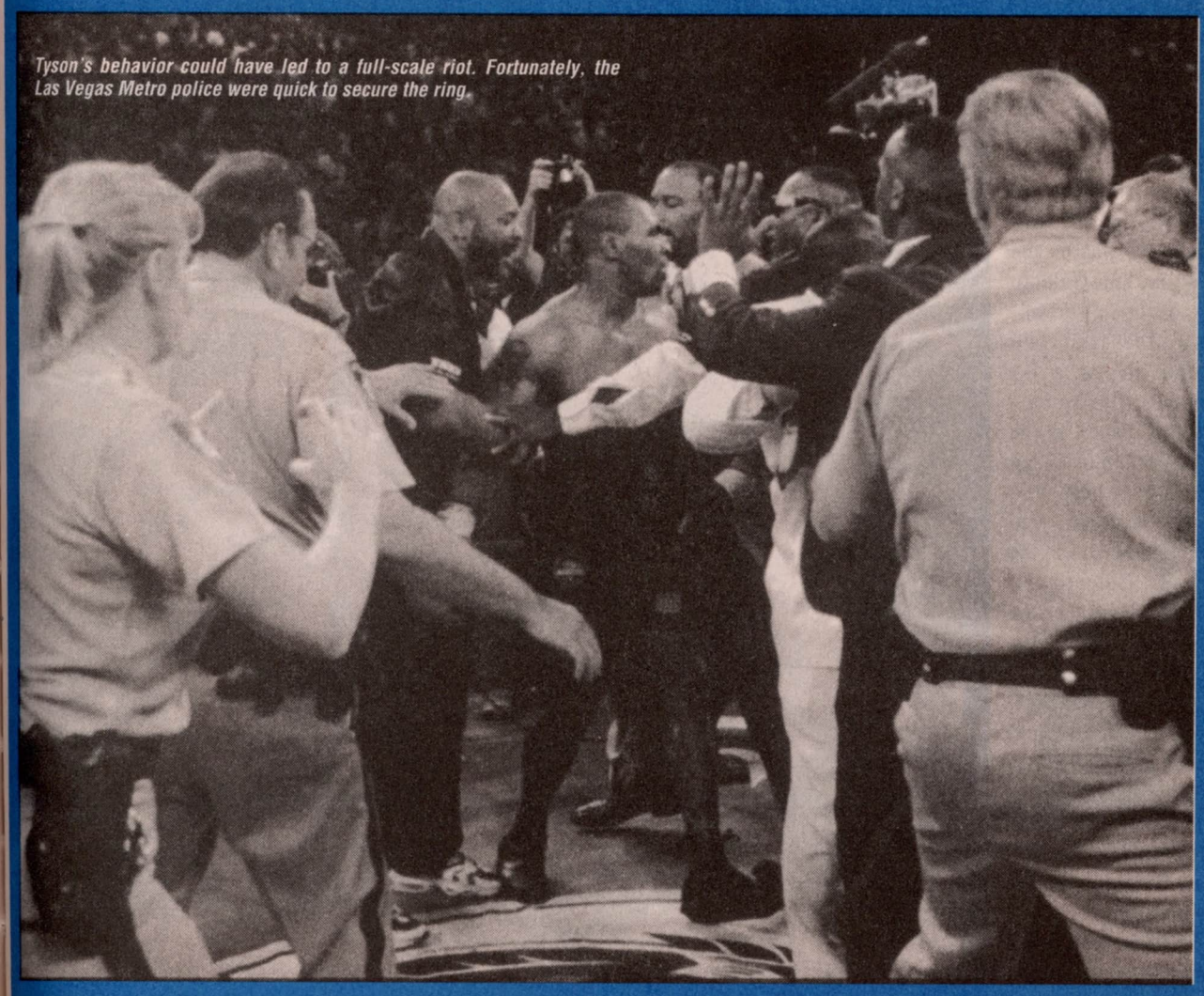
Evander Holyfield W Disq. 3 Mike Tyson, June 28, 1997; Las Vegas; Retains WBA Heavyweight Title

Dog bites man.

There isn't much one can add to the volumes already written about "The Bite Of The Century." Of the dirtiest fights of all-time, the Holyfield-Tyson II fiasco is in a class by itself. Sad to say, but when the truly great fights of the past are forgotten, the image of Tyson chomping on Holyfield's ears will remain as an enduring reminder of 20th-century popular culture.

Of course, other fighters have broken the rules, fouled out, and brought shame and condemnation upon themselves and their sport. Dirty fighting in any form should never be tolerated in a boxing match. But what Tyson did went beyond what has heretofore been considered "traditional" dirty fighting, such as illegal use of head, hands, elbows, and feet. As was seen by millions of people, a former heavyweight champion of the world actually bit a chunk out of an opponent's ear. And then he bit the other ear!

It appears that Tyson, as his former trainer, Teddy Atlas, had predicted, decided to foul out after realizing he could not win. But the perverse way he chose to get himself disqualified revealed more about his fighting persona than all of his previous victories put together.



Tyson's behavior could have led to a full-scale riot. Fortunately, the Las Vegas Metro police were quick to secure the ring.

Tony Galento KO 14 Lou Nova, September 15, 1939; Philadelphia; Heavyweights

"Two Ton" Tony was directly out of central casting. He was everybody's idea of what a rough-and-tumble dirty fighter should look like. The squat, 5'9", 235-pound saloonkeeper more than lived up to the ideal.

Three months before meeting Nova, Galento had floored heavyweight champion Joe Louis with a left hook before suffering a fourth-round knockout. "I'd have moidered the bum if they'd let me fight my way," he said.

Nova was handsome and college-bred. Beautifully built at 6'2" and 207 pounds, the Californian had won 26 of 27 pro bouts. He was on the way up, and Galento was on the way down.

In the first two rounds, Nova, a 4-1 favorite, easily outboxed Galento. In the third, Galento landed his big hook and Nova's legs turned to jelly. As he slid to the canvas, Galento fell on top of him. For the rest of the fight, Galento fought *his* way: rabbit-punches, back hands, gouging, headbutting, heeling, holding and hitting. At one point, after wrestling Nova to the canvas, Galento stepped on his head.

Galento worked his potent hook overtime, both above and below Nova's belt. To his credit, Nova came back with damaging punches of his own (all legal), closing Galento's right eye and splitting his lip. But it wasn't enough to turn the fight in his favor. Galento's brutal assault overwhelmed him. Nova also bled profusely from cuts over both eyes and under his chin. After rallying to win round 10, he was clobbered to the canvas twice in the 14th, prompting referee George Blake to finally halt the slaughter and declare Galento the winner.

In the dressing room, Nova's manager, Ray Carlen, was livid: "Galento fought th foulest, dirtiest, meanest fight in history He ought never be allowed to fight again He's a brute and a menace and a disgrace to the whole human race!" Ray Arcel, wh had worked the corner, concurred. "Loo at the poor kid," he said. "He's been butte and gouged to pieces ... This boy wa fouled into defeat."

Nova recovered and two years later fought Louis for the championship. Galento went on to careers in professional wrestling and show biz.

Heavyweight contenders Nova and Galento engaged in one of the dirtiest fights ever, but only one of them was guilty of repeatedly fouling.

Fritzie Zivic W Disq. 2 Al "Bummy" Davis, November 15,1940; New York City; Welterweights

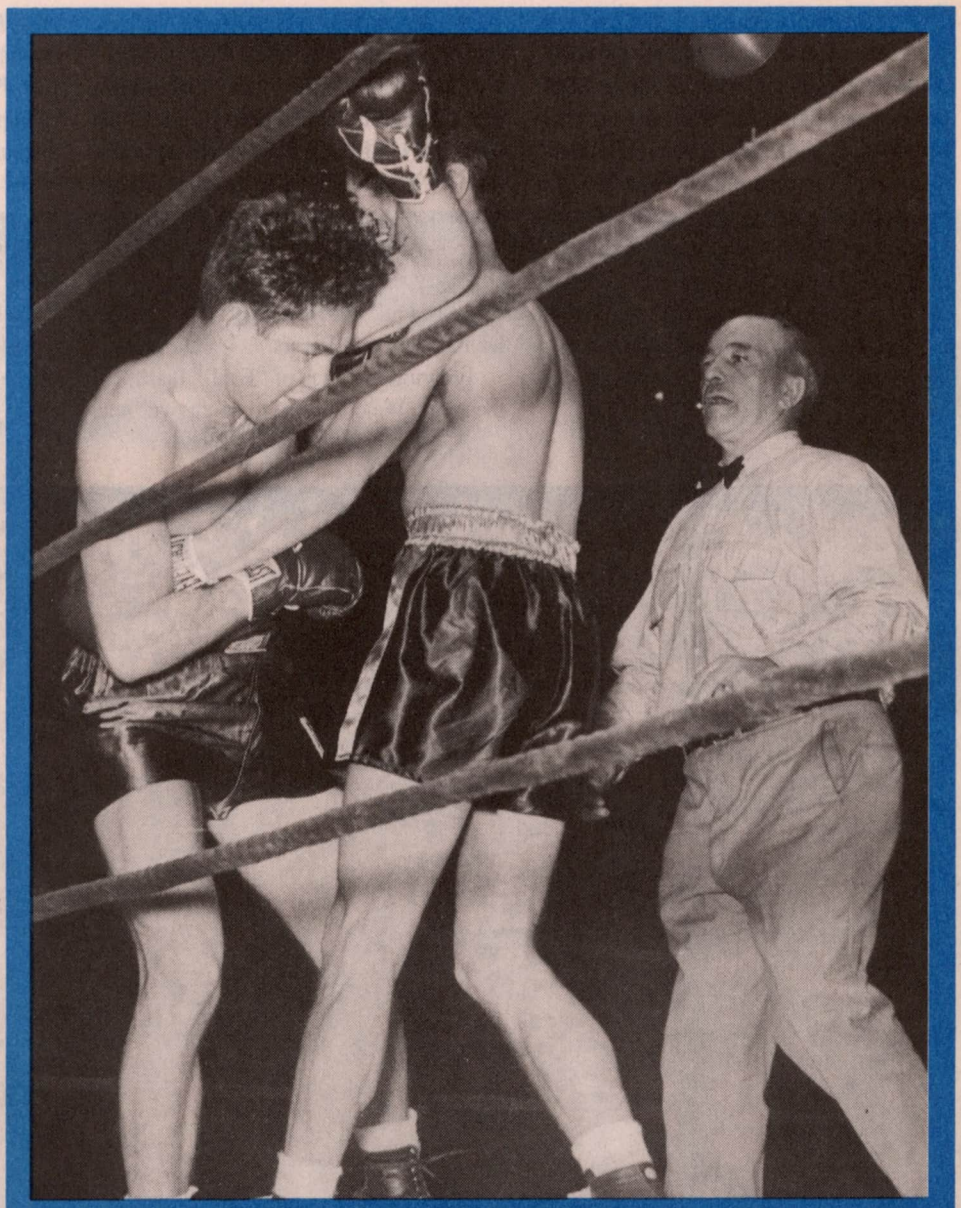
The undisputed patron saint of dirty fighters is former welterweight champion Zivic. In Fritzie's gloved hands (not to mention his head and elbows), the "art" of foul fighting reached new lows. Where other dirty fighters were crude and overt, Zivic's pugilistic indiscretions were smooth and subtle. To bite an opponent would be the ultimate amateur move. The proof of the master's skill is that in 230 fights, Zivic never lost on a foul.

His opponent at Madison Square Garden was Davis, a powerpunching tough guy from the mean streets of Brownsville, Brooklyn. Davis' left hook had flattened 27 of 45 opponents, and he had lost only once. Zivic was a hardened veteran of more than 100 ring wars.

Within a minute of the first round, Zivic began giving Bummy the business. First came the thumb, then the laces across the eyes. He even stepped around the referee to belt Davis. Zivic was thoroughly enjoying himself. Bummy, on the other hand, was steaming. He was a brawler, but he couldn't hope to match Zivic's artful cruelty. "He's trying to blind me!" Bummy screamed to his handlers between rounds.

The same treatment in the second round convinced Bummy to take matters into his own hands and feet. First he pushed Zivic off. "All right, you [expletive]," he said. "If you want to fight dirty, okay." Davis then lost his mind. He began winging punches aimed directly at Zivic's groin. It took a small army of police, seconds, and security staff to restrain the wild-eyed Brownsville bomber. A full-scale riot was narrowly averted.

Bummy was disqualified. He was also suspended for life and fined $2,500. (His license was later reissued.) Ever the artful dodger, Zivic got off scott-free and lived to foul another day.



Bummy Davis (left) wasn't willing to accept the illegal tactics of master fouler Fritzie Zivic. After only two rounds, Davis was disqualified. Later he was suspended and fined.

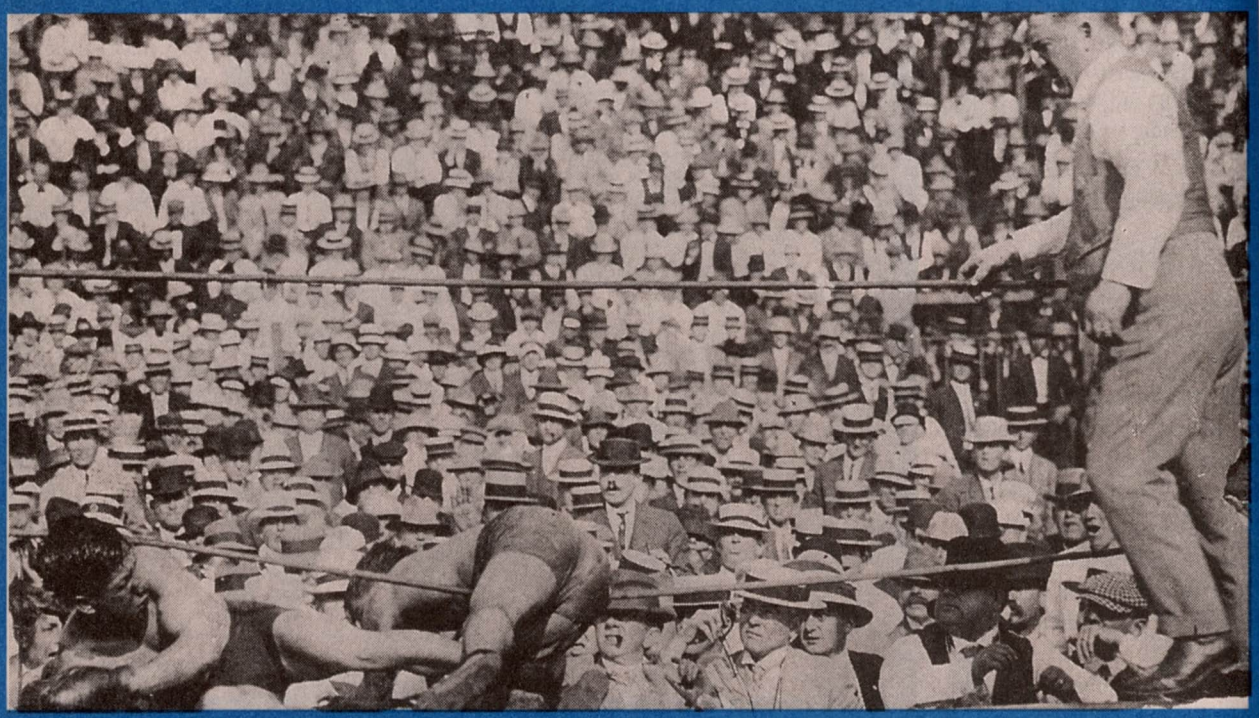
Ad Wolgast KO 13 "Mexican" Joe Rivers, July 4, 1912, Vernon, California
Retains World Lightweight Title

Lightweight champion Wolgast was proud of his ability to absorb terrific punishment. But after almost 100 professional fights, the wear and tear was beginning to show. His challenger, Rivers, a talented boxer-puncher, was given a good chance to dethrone the famed "Michigan Wildcat." As an extra measure of prevention, Wolgast decided to bring in his own hand-picked referee, Jack Welch, to officiate. This, believe it or not, was not an uncommon practice in the pre-commission days.

It was a typical Wolgast fight—intense and brutal. The scheduled 45-round bout was nearing the end of the 13th stanza when Wolgast threw a desperate left that landed several inches below Rivers' beltline. At exactly the same moment, Rivers connected with a powerful right cross to the point of the champion's chin. Rivers collapsed to the canvas, the victim of an obvious foul. Wolgast fell face-forward, landing on top of Rivers.

Ignoring the cries of "Foul!" that filled the arena, Welch started to count over both men. He suddenly stopped at four, reached down, and actually lifted Wolgast to his feet. He then supported the semiconscious champion with his left arm and continued to count over Rivers!

At nine, Rivers staggered to his feet just as the bell rang ending the round. Now Welch moved quickly. He carried Wolgast to his stool and raised his hand in victory. Before the crowd fully realized what had happened, Welch, fearing for his safety, dashed out of the arena just in time to avoid the riot that followed.



Hardly an objective arbiter, referee Welch looks on as Rivers (left) and Wolgast simultaneously crash to the canvas.

Sandy Saddler KO 9 Willie Pep, September 26, 1951; New York City; Retains World Featherweight Title

The fourth and final bout between these bitter rivals was intended to end all arguments as to who was the better man. In previous encounters, Saddler had won twice and Pep once.

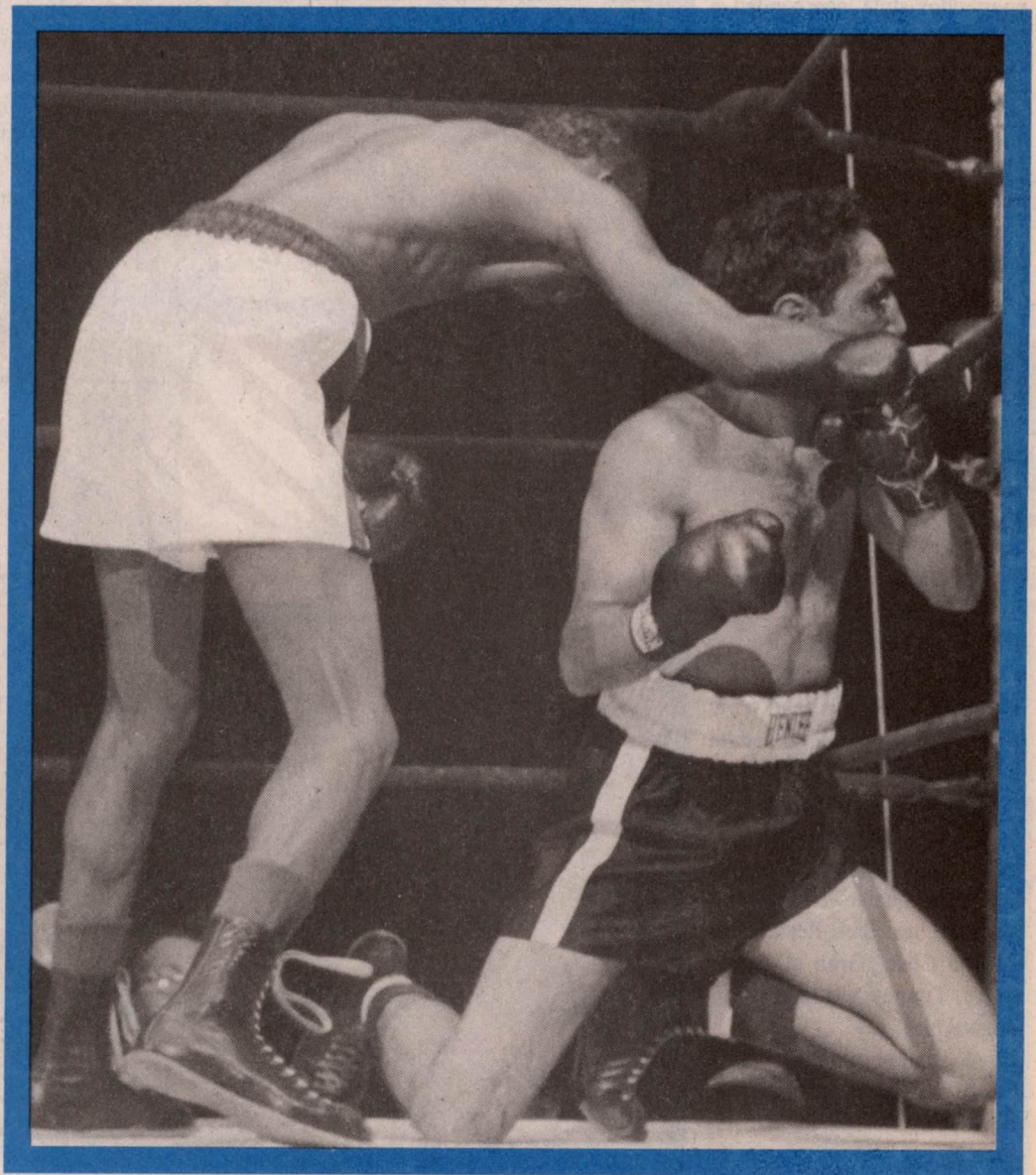
The fouling began in the third round. Saddler was warned repeatedly for holding and hitting. Normally a clean fighter, Pep was frustrated by his opponent's octopus-like embraces. "The only way I could get away from him was to wrestle with him," said Pep. Responded Saddler, "He was holding me by the head and banging away at my eyes. I figured to fight cleanly and started to do so, but Pep started it. He was heeling, thumbing, stepping on my toes, and wrestling all night."

In the eighth round, they attempted to strangle one another. Referee Ray Miller, a former top lightweight contender, would have been entirely justified in throwing both men out of the ring. Instead, he was twice thrown to the floor while trying to separate the fighters.

Between fouls, Pep was reaching Saddler with combinations, but was absorbing severe punishment in return. By the end of the ninth round, the once-untouchable "Will O The Wisp" had had enough. Claiming the cut over his right eye was interfering with his vision, he refused to continue.

In the aftermath, the New York State Athletic Commission decided to punish both men for "violating every rule in the book, and conduct detrimental to boxing." The Commission suspended Saddler indefinitely (the suspension lasted two months) and revoked Pep's license to box. The revocation lasted almost two years.

Interestingly, after nine rounds, Pep was ahead on points.



Given the brilliance of the combatants, the fourth battle between familiar rivals Sandy Saddler and Willie Pep was unimaginably dirty. Saddler ended up winning three of the four matchups.

Gene Tunney W 15 Harry Greb, February 23, 1923; New York City; Retains American Light Heavyweight Title

Greb was every fighter's worst nightmare. Fighting him was like facing three tough opponents at the same time. The aptly nicknamed "Pittsburgh Windmill" threw more punches in one round than most fighters did in 10. His unorthodox style incorporated a brand of foul-fighting that, in its speed and savagery, has never been duplicated.

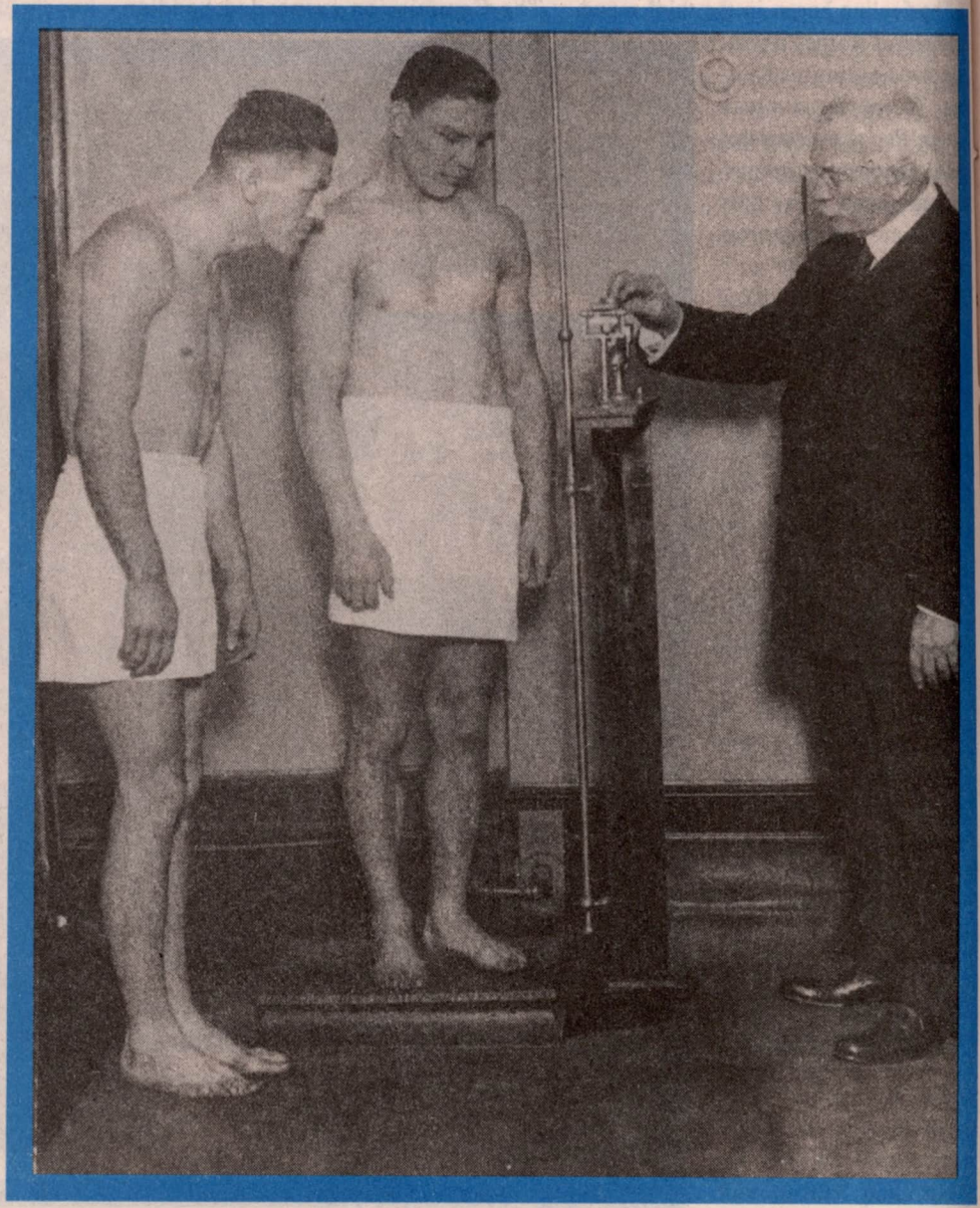
A year earlier, Greb had mauled Tunney for 15 rounds. Tunney received the full Greb treatment. The future heavyweight champion received the worst beating of his career.

Their highly anticipated rematch drew 12,000 fans to Madison Square Garden. An 8-5 favorite, Greb tried his best to duplicate his previous effort, but was stymied by Tunney's agile footwork and sharp counterpunches.

Going into the eighth round, Tunney held a slight lead. Out of frustration, Greb began stepping on Tunney's feet. He also grabbed Tunney's head from behind with his left hand and hit him with the right. Normally a clean fighter, Tunney roughhoused Greb right back. He was being drawn into an alley fight, and nobody in the world was better at that than Greb. Realizing he couldn't beat Greb at such a game, Tunney returned to his original plan.

As Tunney regained control, Greb became more brazen. Finally, in the 12th round, referee Patsy Haley, disgusted with Greb's repeated fouls, halted the bout to admonish him. Greb responded by getting into a shouting match with him. Haley allowed the bout to continue.

In the 14th, Tunney landed a smashing right to Greb's chin that nearly dropped him. Still feeling the effect of that punch in the 15th round, Greb was unable to launch an appropriate counterattack, and Tunney was awarded a close decision victory.



Tunney (left) and Greb weigh in for their second of five battles, a 15-round contest for the American light heavyweight title in 1923. Overall, Tunney beat Greb twice, lost once, and there were two no-decisions.

Riddick Bowe W Disq. 7 Andrew Golota, July 11, 1996; New York City; Heavyweights

What was Andrew Golota thinking? Or was he thinking?

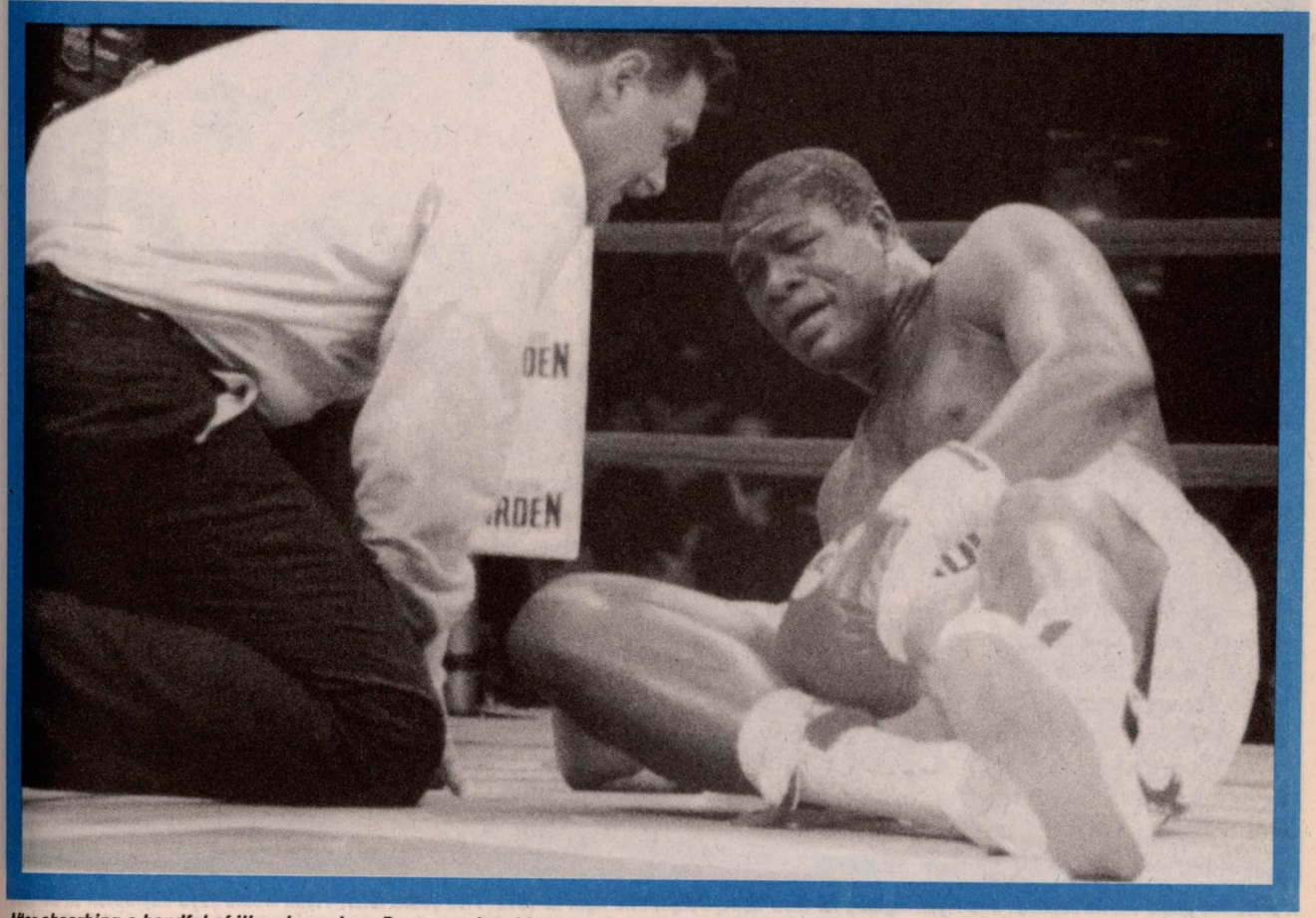
An undefeated heavyweight, Golota was on the verge of boxing superstardom. In between his flagrant fouling, he was beating up on Riddick Bowe, the number-one contender. All he had to do was keep his punches up and he was virtually guaranteed a victory on points.

From the second round on, referee Wayne Kelly was constantly admonishing the Polish brute, even deducting points, but he allowed the bout to continue. Meanwhile, Golota's cornermen, Lou Duva and Roger Bloodworth, pleaded with their charge to stop hitting Bowe below the belt. It seemed that Golota, whose steady diet of tomato cans had not properly prepared him for his first real challenge, was instinctively reverting to his street-brawling roots every time he was stung by a hard punch. His response to a hook or a cross to the head was a left or right to Bowe's groin.

Whatever the reason for Golota's deplorable ring etiquette, the end result was a disqualification loss. But the festivities were just beginning. As Bowe lay writhing on the canvas, his out-of-control supporters stormed the ring and attacked Golota, precipitating the worst riot in the once-proud history of Madison Square Garden.

Incredibly, the rematch in Atlantic City was almost a carbon copy of the first fight. Golota fouled out again for repeatedly hitting low, but at least this time there was no riot.

Does Golota deserve another chance? Obviously, the promoters and their lackey boxing commissions think so. As we went to press, Golota was given an October 4 shot at WBC champion Lennox Lewis. Golota was sure to open as an odds-on favorite—to foul out.



After absorbing a handful of illegal punches, Bowe wondered how low Golota could possibly go. Amazingly, the scenario was repeated in the rematch.

Jack Johnson W Disq. 9 Fireman Jim Flynn, June 4, 1912; Las Vegas, New Mexico; Retains World Heavyweight Title

It had been two years since Johnson wrecked former champion James J. Jeffries in boxing's first Fight of the Century. The search for a White Hope to dethrone the arrogant black colossus was intense. The best of a mediocre lot was Flynn, a mean-spirited veteran with a reputation as a dirty fighter.

There was bad blood between these two, and when they met in the center of the ring, Johnson refused to shake Flynn's hand.

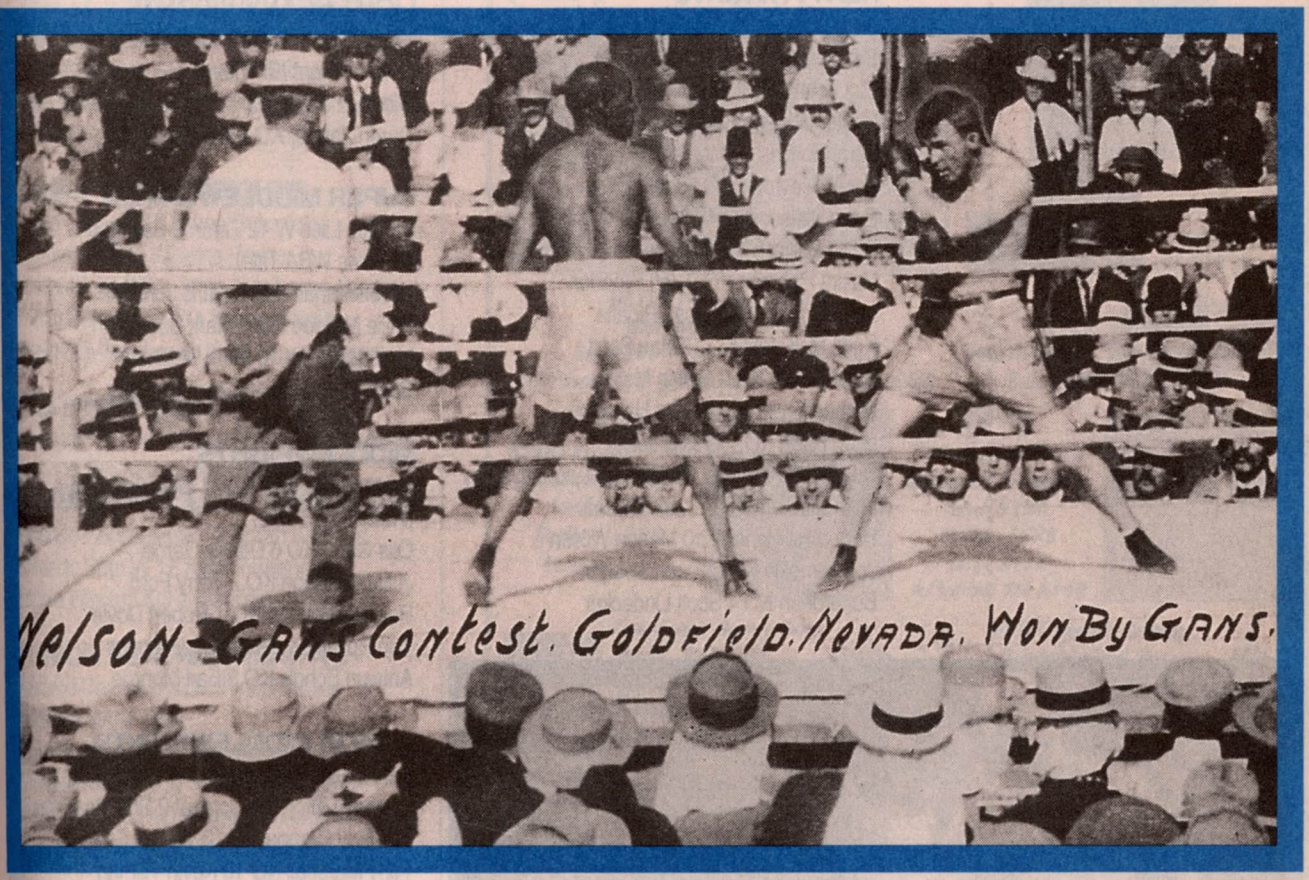
As expected, Flynn was totally outclassed. Try as he might, the Fireman couldn't lay a glove on Johnson. By the fifth round, Flynn was a mess. He was bleeding from the mouth and cuts over both eyes. The only time he was able to score was when Johnson purposely stuck out his stomach and told the hapless challenger to "hit here, boy." Worse yet, Johnson would talk to his wife and friends at ringside during Flynn's ineffectual attempts to hurt him.

In the sixth round, Flynn, realizing he would never beat Johnson with his fists, began to use his head as a battering ram. He repeatedly catapulted himself toward Johnson in a blatant attempt to butt him. Yet despite Flynn's outrageous effrontery, Johnson had no trouble avoiding the butts. Flynn resembled a crazed billygoat in his attempts to reach Johnson with his head.

Referee Ed Smith threatened Flynn with disqualification at least a dozen times, but he never stopped the bout. Finally, in the ninth round, Capt. Fred Fornoff, who was representing the Governor of Nevada at the fight, stepped into the ring. In true Western fashion, Fornoff carried a .44 six-gun strapped to his waist. He announced that the bout was over because the fight had become "a slaughter and a merely brutal exhibition."

A priceless photo shows Johnson and Flynn signing for their heavyweight title fight in 1912. Five years later, Flynn would kayo champion-to-be Jack Dempsey in one round. But against Johnson, Flynn was no match and had to resort to illegal tactics.

Joe Gans W Disq. 42 Battling Nelson, September 3, 1906; Goldfield; Nevada; Retains World Lightweight Title



Gans (left) and Nelson battle it out during the longest world title fight ever contested under Queensberry rules.

Lightweight champion Gans, the famous "Old Master," was a brilliant boxer with knockout power in both fists. His challenger, Nelson, was neither a great boxer nor a particularly powerful hitter. But what he did have—endless stamina and the ability to absorb an incredible amount of punishment—enabled him to defeat some of the best fighters of his era. His style was primitive and his tactics often foul, but he rarely lost. Fighters exhausted themselves pounding away at his thick skull and indestructible body.

Against Gans, "The Durable Dane" lived up to his nickname, sponging a brutal beating for the first 10 rounds. In the 11th, Nelson began to butt Gans in the clinches. In the 12th, he hit Gans low. In the 15th, Nelson tripped and fell to the canvas. Gans good-naturedly held out his hand to help the challenger to his feet. Upon rising, Nelson, still holding on to Gans' hand, threw a terrific surprise punch to the midsection. The crowd of 11,000 voiced its disapproval. Nelson could not have cared less. At the bell, he kicked Gans in the shins, and Gans kicked back.

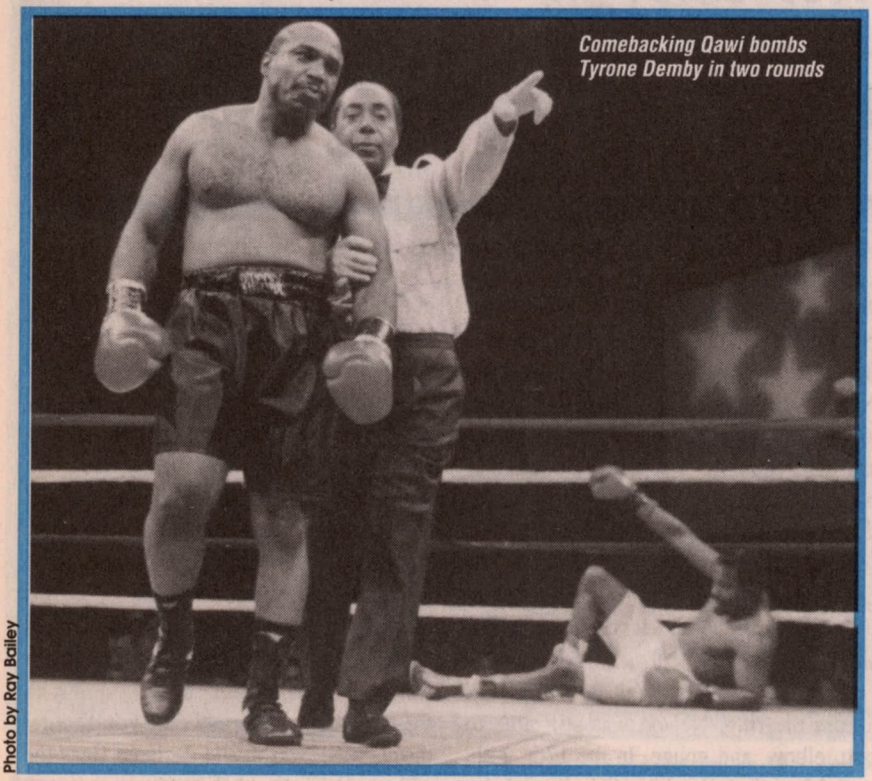
Even though he was being belted across the ring, Nelson was still able to butt, elbow, and gouge. In the 17th, 24th, and 32nd rounds, he was warned for punching low. But Gans did not become incapacitated, and referee George Siler allowed the bout to continue.

By the 42nd round, Nelson's eye was shut tight and his entire face was battered out of shape. Gans did not look too good either. He had broken a bone in his left hand in the 32nd round and was bleeding from the ears and mouth. With only three rounds to go, Nelson, encouraged by his corner to foul out, threw a powerful right south of the border. Gans dropped to the canvas and was unable to fight on. With the crowd screaming, "Foul! Foul!" Siler disqualified Nelson and declared Gans the winner. ■

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Lennox Lewis W Disq. 5 Henry Akinwande
(Retains WBC Title)
Kirk Johnson KO 7 Louis Monaco
Buster Douglas KO 4 Quinn Navarre
Larry Holmes W 10 Maurice Harris
Zeljko Mavrovic KO 5 Lajos Eros
Brian Nielsen KO 4 Marcos Gonzalez
Obed Sullivan KO 3 Jesse Shelby
Hasim Rahman KO 9 Jeff Wooden
Larry Donald KO 7 Jose Ribalta
Keith McKnight KO 1 Brian Scott
Bert Cooper KO 1 Richie Melito
Michael Rush W 10 Sam Hampton
Greg Page KO 1 Wes Black
Dwight Muhammad Qawi KO 2 Tyrone Demby
John McClain KO 7 Mario Osuna
Robert Hawkins W 10 Marion Wilson
Jeff Lampkin KO 5 Exum Speight
Butterbean KO 4 Scott Lindecker



Comebacking Qawi bombs Tyrone Demby in two rounds

Photo by Ray Bailey

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Kenny Keene W 10 Mike Sedillo
Juan Carlos Gomez KO 4 Ted Cofie
Yosukezan Nishijima W 12 Brian LaSpada

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

William Guthrie KO 3 Darrin Allen
(Wins Vacant IBF Title)
Ole Klemetsen KO 3 Rick Camlin
Daren Zenner KO 6 James Gatlin

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Frankie Liles W 12 Zafarou Ballogou
(Retains WBA Title)
Herol Graham KO 8 Chris Johnson
Willie Monroe KO 8 Mark Buchanan
Mark Baker W 10 Mark Delaney
Scott Lopeck W 10 Kevin Pompey

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Bernard Hopkins KO 11 Glen Johnson
(Retains IBF Title)
Otis Grant KO 6 Danny Garcia
Julian Jackson KO 2 Terry Ford
Reggie Johnson KO 1 Robert Doyle
Yuri Epifantsev W 12 Gary Jacobs
Antwun Echols KO 3 Earl Monroe

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Julio Cesar Vasquez KO 1 Ramon Britez
Emmett Linton No-Contest 2 Shibata Flores
Yori Boy Campas W 10 Verdell Smith
Tony Marshall KO 10 Kevin Tillman
Aaron Davis KO 1 Tommy Small
Andrew Lewis KO 6 Stephan Johnson
Anthony Jones KO 7 Jorge Vaca
Rhoshii Wells W 4 Cordell Parker

WELTERWEIGHTS

Joey Gamache KO 3 Rocky Berg
Ernie Artango W 10 Isikeli Koroi
Adrian Stone KO 5 Greg Johnson
Ken Sigurani W 12 Henry Hughes
Ricky Hesia W 10 Giorbis Barthelemy
Fernando Vargas KO 1 Eugene Lopez

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Rafael Ruelas KO 2 Mike Griffith
Hector Lopez W 12 Mark Lewis
Mark Lewis KO 8 Raul Hernandez

Hector Quiroz D 10 Joey Negron
Bolillo Gonzalez KO 4 Elias Cruz
Terrance Cauthen KO 1 Fred Cannady

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Steve Johnston W 12 Hiroyuki Sakamoto
(Retains WBC Title)
Angel Manfredy KO 2 Kevin Sedan
Joel Casamayor KO 2 Salvador Diaz Montes
Juan Lazcano W 12 James Crayton

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Julien Lorcy KO 2 Bruno Rabanales
Djamel Lifa KO 3 Carlos Rocha
Justin Juuko KO 9 Jorge Luis Lopez-Garcia
Diego Corrales KO 11 Manny Castillo
Floyd Mayweather Jr. KO 4 Jesus Chavez

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Naseem Hamed KO 2 Juan Gerardo Cabrera
Kevin Kelley KO 10 Orlando Fernandez
Juan Manuel Marquez KO 7 Catalino Becerra
Orlando Canizales W 12 Edwin Santana
Orlando Soto W 12 Almir Fernandez
Richie Wenton KO 2 Mauricio Bernal

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Antonio Cermeno KO 12 Yuichi Kasai
(Retains WBA Title)
Fred Norwood W 10 Daryl Pinckney
Enrique Sanchez W 10 Manuel Chavez
Carlos Navarro KO 2 Gustavo Balderas
Spencer Oliver W 12 Serge Poilblan

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Tim Austin KO 8 Mbulelo Botile
(Wins IBF Title)
Jorge Eliecer Julio W 12 Oscar Maldonado
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi W 10 Ricardo Medina

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Johnny Tapia W 12 Danny Romero
(Wins IBF Title)
Eric Morel KO 2 Mauro Diaz

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Baby Jake Matlala KO 9 Michael Carbajal
Edgar Cardenas KO 6 Francisco Garcia
Jose Laureano W 12 Marcos Pacheco

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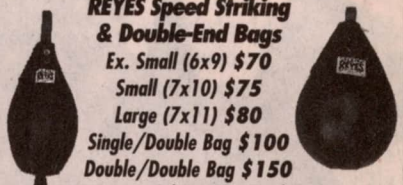

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RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

In the first round of his semifinal bout at the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Austin was thumbed in the left eye by Cuba's Raul Gonzalez. Panicking, he turned away, suffered a standing eight-count, and shortly after was rescued by the referee. Austin took home a bronze medal, but flew home angry and frustrated.

In the second round of the southpaw's first world title fight, a challenge of outstanding IBF bantamweight champion Mbulelo Botile, Austin suffered a broken jaw. Blood filled his mouth, and the South African began zeroing in with right hands. This time there was no panic. Austin kept his composure, ignoring the pain and ultimately counterpunching Botile into submission.

"I got hit with a right hand and felt my jaw lock," Austin said of Botile's second-round assault.

At the time of the stoppage, Austin was narrowly ahead, but Botile was beginning to rally. Had the challenger caved in, or even surrendered, it would have been excusable. But Austin decided to stop using excuses the day he boarded that plane and flew home from Spain.

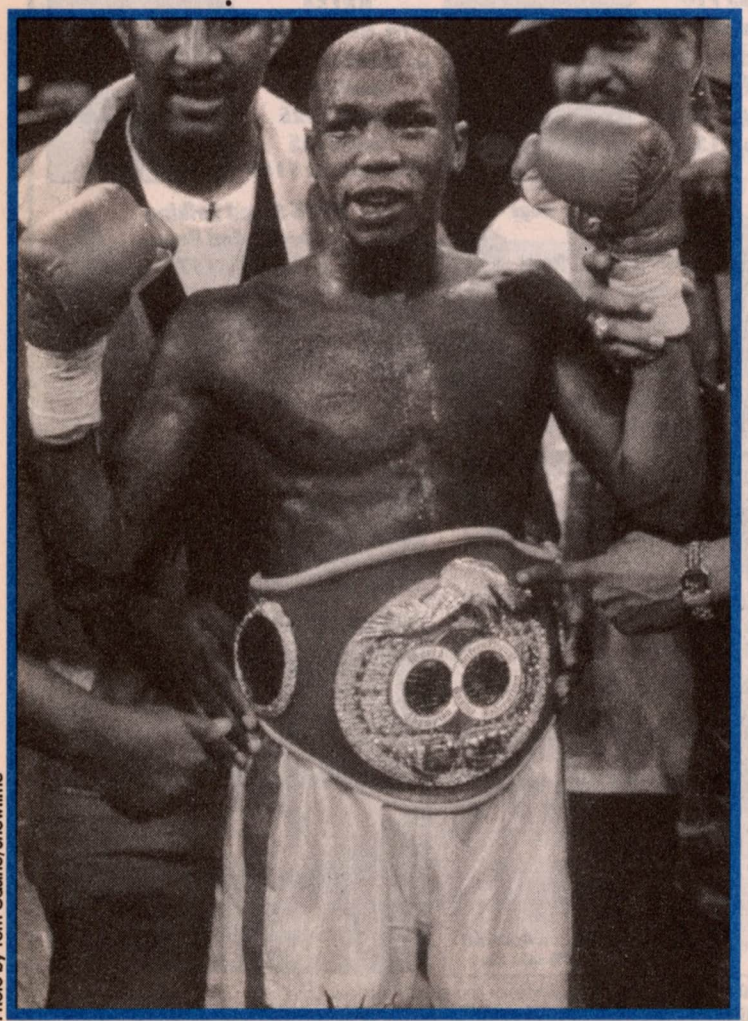


Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Tim Austin

Lennox Lewis W Disq. 5 Henry Akinwande

Stateline, Nevada: With this WBC heavyweight title fight coming on the heels of Holyfield-Tyson II, promoter Dino Duva put it best in the press room following the disqualification of mandatory challenger Akinwande: "I'm sad and ashamed to say that this sport is in trouble."

Caesars Tahoe, hosting the first heavyweight title fight ever in Stateline, hoped for better after the bout, originally scheduled for Atlantic City, was moved here. And 7-5 favorite Lewis, making the first defense of his second reign, hoped to win impressively. No one got what he wanted.

Often a tentative starter, Lewis, 242, London, England, came out quickly, working his jab and backing off Akinwande, 237½, Tallahassee, Florida, via London, England. Less than a minute into the round, the 31-year-old Lewis scored with a right to the head that shook Akinwande, 31, and forced him to hold for what would be the first of many instances. Lewis, who stands 6'5" and has a reach of 82 inches, isn't used to facing bigger opponents. From the start, however, it was Akinwande (6'7", 86-inch reach) who was plainly uncomfortable.

Moments later, another grappling attempt led to the fighters entangling and falling to the canvas. When the fight resumed, Lewis' jab continued to bother the challenger, who attempted a left-right and missed badly. Just before the bell, Lewis landed another hard right to the head.

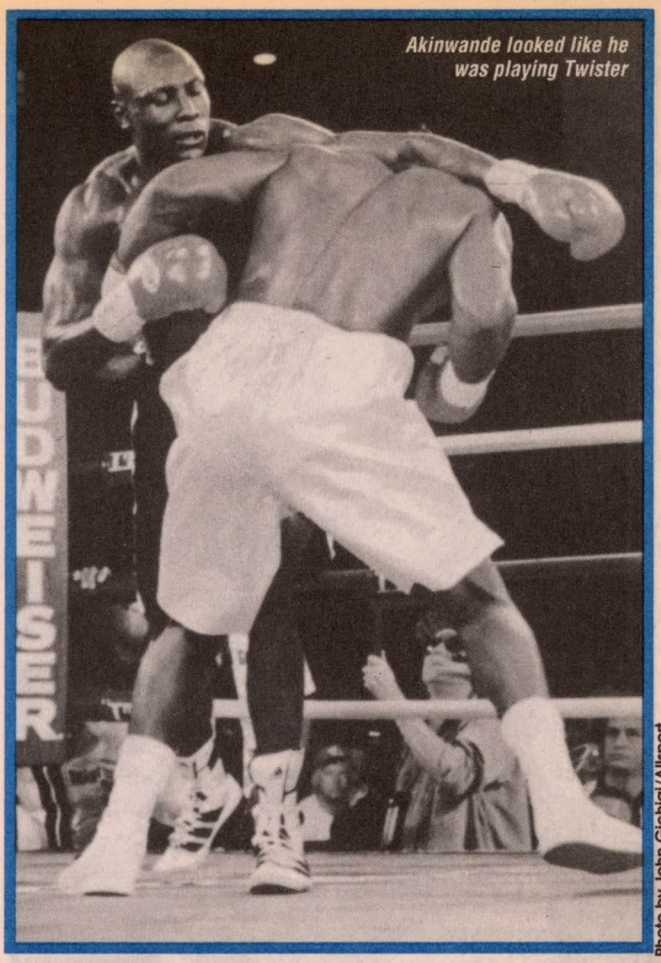
In the second, Akinwande, unable to get off any meaningful punches, grabbed hold of Lewis whenever he found himself in close. After several such instances, referee Mills Lane (USA) called time out and warned Akinwande in front of his trainer, Don Turner. The third man then deducted a point. Lewis scored with a right to the chin and added several bodypunches. The champion continued to work the body in the third, and Lewis continued to hold, but also landed a right halfway through the round that forced Lewis to keep his balance by touching his right glove to the canvas. It should have been ruled a knockdown, but wasn't. Before the round's end, Akinwande was warned twice more for excessive holding.

Lewis, 31-1 (25), dominated the fourth, shaking Akinwande, 32-1-1 (19), with a right to the head and a hook to the chin. As Akinwande kept holding, Lewis kept landing to the body, at one point making the challenger wince from a right to the ribs. Warned again for holding and refusing to break upon command, Akinwande didn't land a single punch with any authority.

Lewis opened the fifth with a right to the head. After several clinches, all of them initiated by Akinwande, Lane called time and again summoned Turner to the apron. "Next time he's disqualified," he warned fighter and trainer. When Akinwande failed to change his tactics, an exasperated Lane told the challenger, "That's it ... enough!" then waved him to his corner at the 2:34 mark.

The judges, each of whom gave Lewis every round, were Dalby Shirley (USA), Terry Smith (USA), and Larry O'Connell (England).

Afterward, Lane, who had also worked Lewis-Oliver McCall and Holyfield-Tyson II, said, "I did the best I could, but there comes a time when enough is enough." There were few if any complaints. HBO's Lou DiBella thanked Lane "for again displaying his integrity."



Akinwande looked like he was playing Twister

Photo by John Gichigi/Allsport

"I was getting a little frustrated," acknowledged Lewis, "but I felt I was going to knock him out in another round or two."

Incredibly, Akinwande tried to justify his tactics, saying, "I don't think there was that much holding. [In 14½ minutes of action, THE RING counted 50 clinches.] I don't see any reason for holding up my purse." The Nevada State Athletic Commission did just that, but a few days later voted to release all of Akinwande's $1-million purse. (Lewis earned $1.5-million.)

Akinwande's best line came when a reporter asked him what had happened to his jab. Said the loser, "I think it was the altitude."

The bout was televised by HBO.

Promoters: Main Events and Panix Productions, in conjunction with Don King Productions and Caesars Tahoe

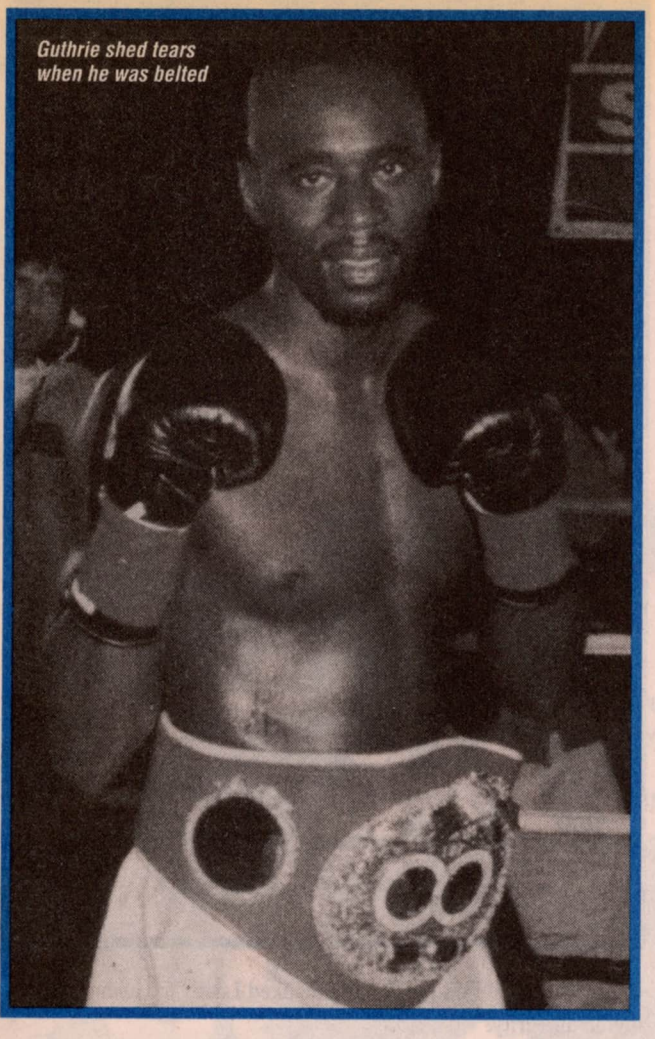
(7-12-97)

Steve Nicolaisen

Raul Marquez KO 4 Romallis Ellis

Lake Charles, Louisiana: Matched at the Isle of Capri Casino, fellow southpaws and former Olympians Marquez (Class of '92) and Ellis (Class of '88) shared a fight of firsts. It was Marquez' first defense of the IBF junior middleweight crown, and Ellis' first shot at a world title. Marquez proved much stronger, stopping the game Ellis, a blown-up welterweight, at 1:14 of the fourth round.

The battle began with the speedy Ellis, 153, Atlanta, Georgia,



Guthrie shed tears when he was belted

Photo by Angie Carlino

boxing, and Marquez, 153, Houston, Texas, applying pressure. Marquez, who suffered two bad cuts in his title-winning effort vs. Anthony Stephens, studied the challenger for most of the first round. He did land a solid left midway through the round, but Ellis answered with fluid combinations.

Marquez, 27-0 (20), opened the second with a solid shot to the body. He increased the tempo and continued landing to the body before Ellis, 24-2 (17), responded. When Ellis scored with bunches of punches, Marquez backpedaled and covered up. The challenger's success, however, was short-lived.

A straight left 37 seconds into the round dumped Ellis flat on his back. He was up at referee Elmo Adolph's count of three, but a few seconds later, two solid shots to the head pinned him in a corner.

In the third, the 25-year-old Marquez again had Ellis, 31, reeling across the ring and trapped in a corner. Ellis looked wobbly and weak, his arms draped at his sides.

By the fourth, the outcome was all but certain, with the only variable being time. Marquez again jumped on his man, but Ellis fought back. It wasn't until a one-two again downed Ellis (Adolph incorrectly ruled a slip) that the challenger looked like he wanted out. A little less than a minute later, he got his wish. Pinned in a corner once more, he was taking a pounding when Adolph stepped in.

The judges, Gary Merritt, Johnny Femia, and Lee McGowan, are all from the USA, as is Adolph.

"He was just too strong; I didn't think he'd be that strong," said Ellis, who indicated he'd return to welterweight.

For his part, Marquez, who will next appear in a defense vs. Yori Boy Campas on the Oscar De La Hoya-Hector Camacho undercard on September 13, ripped a page from the public relations manual of childhood friend and Olympic teammate De La Hoya. Flashing a wide grin and sporting a small strawberry over his left eye, the media-savvy Marquez said he'd like bigger fights and better paydays. And he made sure his promoter, Bob Arum, was within earshot.

The bout was televised by ABC.

Promoter: Top Rank Inc.

(7-5-97)

Charlie Bier

William Guthrie KO 3 Darrin Allen

Indio, California: After a tug-o-war between a pair of promotional outfits and a legal battle to guarantee a title shot, the championship came remarkably easy for Guthrie, who won the vacant IBF light heavyweight title by beating up on Allen at Fantasy Springs Casino.

Earlier this year, Guthrie left promoter Don King for America Presents, who happened to win the purse bid to stage this fight. A couple of months later, a federal judge ruled that Virgil Hill would have to defend against the top-rated Guthrie by July 19. After Hill lost the title to Dariusz Michalczewski on June 13, the new titlist assumed the obligation. Michalczewski immediately notified the IBF he had no intention of risking the belt that soon, and the title was declared vacant, clearing the way for Guthrie-Allen.

The 30-year-old Guthrie, 173, Wilmington, Delaware, attacked from the start, and Allen, 174, Columbus, Ohio, who had fought just once in 17 months, offered virtually no competition. At the opening bell, Guthrie, a southpaw, rushed at Allen, 32, catching him with an overhand right to the back of the head and a series of uppercuts.

Guthrie, 24-0 (21), continued his assault in the second, and Allen, 23-3-1 (8), remained in a defensive mode. In the third, a left downed Allen along the ropes, marking the beginning of the end. A few seconds later, Allen took a knee, necessitating another count from referee Robert Byrd (USA). When he arose, he punched as if he had nothing to lose. His right hands had no effect, and when Guthrie dropped him again with a right uppercut and right hook, the three-knockdown rule brought an automatic stoppage at the 2:38 mark.

The judges were Raul Caiz, Gwen Adair, and Lou Filippo, all from the USA.

Breaking into tears, Guthrie, who has done prison time for selling drugs, said, "It's been a long road, trying to take shortcuts when I should've stayed on the straight and narrow."

Assuming that Lou Del Valle fights for the vacant WBA title, Guthrie's highest-rated available contender is Hill. Guthrie now wears a championship belt, but if he wants to prove he's a champion, he'll defend against the former titlist who he says ducked him.

The bout was televised on Fox Sports.

(7-19-97)

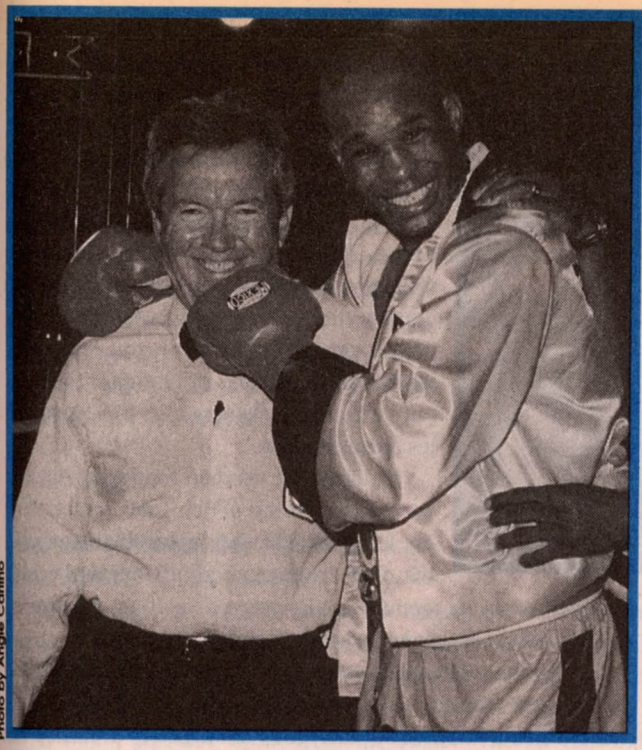


Photo by Angle Catino

After beating up Johnson, Hopkins tried ref Pat Russell

Bernard Hopkins KO 11 Glen Johnson

Indio, California: For a year or so, all the middleweight champions—at last count there were about 23—have been talking of unifying the title. The talk is turning to whispers, and soon the silence will be deafening. That's because IBF champion Hopkins has emerged as the best 160-pounder in the world, if not one of the best fighters regardless of weight. The other various alphabet champs—William Joppy, Lonnie Bradley, Keith Holmes, etc.—have wisely clammed up. Suddenly, each seems satisfied with his slice of the pie.

Making his fifth defense, the 31-year-old Hopkins, 160, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, again displayed his well-rounded skills and exceptional conditioning, dominating the defensive-minded Johnson, 159¾, Miami, Florida, via Jamaica, at Fantasy Springs Casino.

Hopkins was aggressive from the start, punching to the head and body. Johnson, 28, who was making a severe jump up in class, kept a high guard, and only a few of the champion's punches got through. Johnson's problem was that he threw virtually no leather of his own.

Halfway through round two, Hopkins, 32-2-1 (25), stunned Johnson, 32-1 (22), and tried for the finish with a 30-second barrage. Johnson clinched to survive, and never threatened again.

Whether inside or at long range, Hopkins dominated. Unable to catch Johnson cleanly with his weapon of choice, a right uppercut, he settled for jabs, straight rights, and bodyshots. Late in the fifth, a left uppercut landed flush, prompting another blitz. Again, Johnson proved tough enough to take it.

Hopkins fought at a lightweight's pace, and with Johnson's right eye beginning to close, the only question was whether his corner would let him out for the start of each new round. The challenger bled from the mouth in the ninth, the first round during which he backed up throughout. Hopkins looked fresh in the 10th, and when he began potshotting an exhausted Johnson in the 11th, referee Pat Russell (USA) stepped in at the 1:23 mark. Why Johnson's trainer, Pat Burns, didn't surrender long before that is a mystery.

The judges were Fritz Werner, Larry Rozadilla, and Jon Schorle, all from the USA.

"Glen Johnson was a tough guy," said Hopkins. "If I had let up for one second in my training and preparation, he'd be world champion right now."

Hopkins didn't bother talking about unifying the title. It's as if he's risen above that. Instead, he talked about a rematch with Roy Jones, who defeated him in 1993. At least he wants to fight the best, something we're not sure we can say about the rest of the top middleweights.

The bout was televised by CBS.

Promoter: America Presents

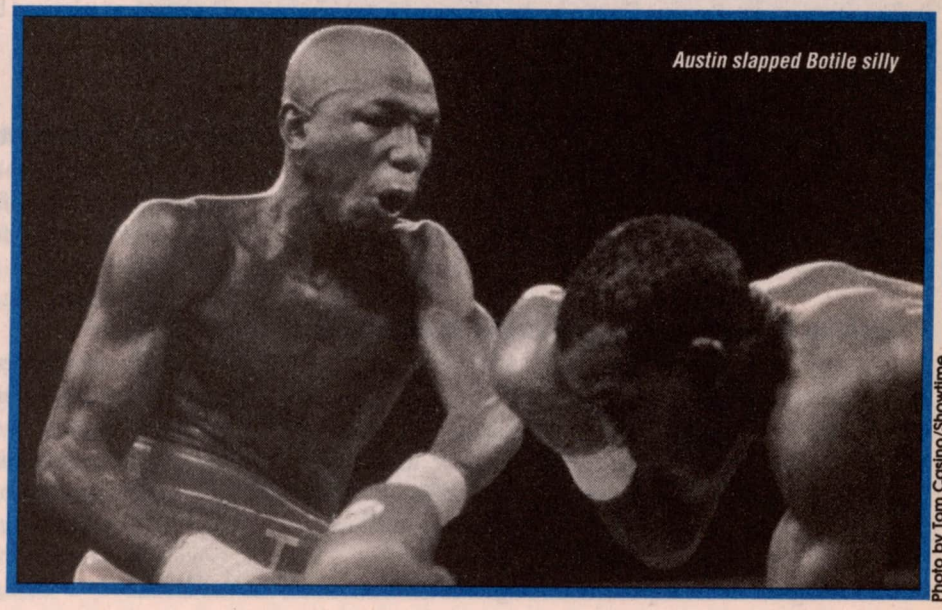
(7-20-97)

Tim Austin KO 8 Mbulelo Botile

Nashville, Tennessee: It was a strange way to prepare for his first crack at a world title, but Austin overcame a 17-month layoff to overpower Botile at the Nashville Arena. Worse yet, he suffered through a broken jaw.

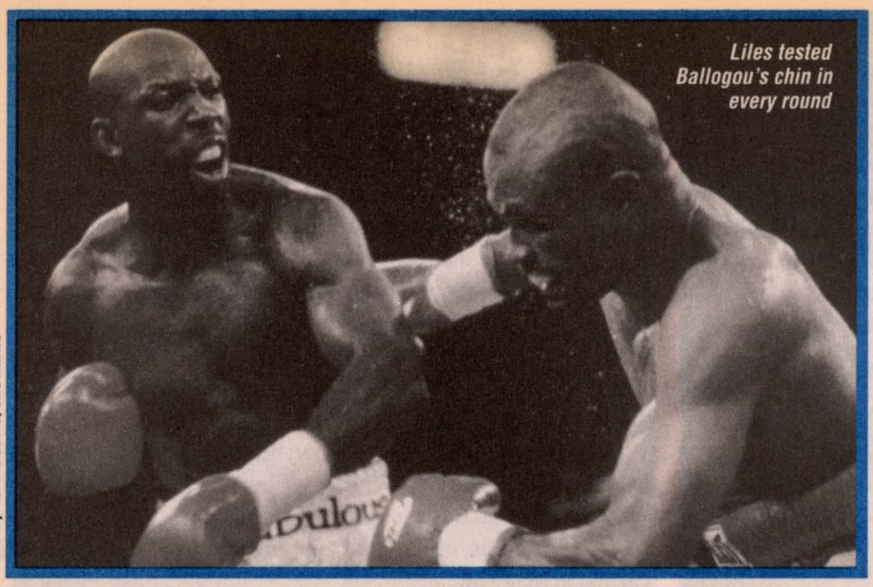
It was Botile's sixth defense.

The 26-year-old Austin, 118, Cincinnati, Ohio, had been inactive because of injuries and managerial problems. On the other hand, Botile, 118, East London, South Africa, had been active and sharp. No matter. Austin, a southpaw who won a bronze medal at the 1992 Olympics, displayed superior power from the start.



Austin slapped Botile silly

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime



Liles tested Ballogou's chin in every round

Photo by Tom Casino/Showtime

Austin, the mandatory challenger, was quicker in the first round, but Botile, 24, finished the stanza with a crackling left hook. Botile enjoyed a big second round, landing two booming rights, one of which broke Austin's jaw. The champion was marked as well, with a mouse forming under his right eye.

Botile forced the action in an effort to create counterpunching opportunities, but Austin picked his spots with care. A counter left startled Botile just before the bell ending the fifth. The champion, however, regained control in the sixth, outworking Austin, who was waiting too long to punch. In the fast-paced seventh, Botile suffered the first knockdown of his career, pro or amateur, when Austin scored with a right hook. It seemed more of a push on the follow-through, but referee Mark Nelson (USA) ruled a knockdown.

The end came suddenly in the eighth. A counter left with a minute to go left Botile, 21-1 (13), stumbling along the ropes. He set himself to deliver a right, but Austin, 16-0-1 (15), was quicker to the trigger, and after his right hook connected flush, Botile turned his back and then went down. Nelson didn't bother to count, calling a halt at the 2:20 mark.

The judges were Stanley Christodoulou (South Africa), Dr. Ruben Garcia (USA), and Waldemar Schmidt (Puerto Rico). After seven rounds, Austin led on two of three cards, with the third even.

A couple of days after the bout, Austin underwent surgery to repair his jaw.

The bout was televised by Showtime.

Promoter; Don King

(7-19-97)

Frankie Liles W 12 Zafarou Ballogou

Nashville, Tennessee: No, Togo isn't the dog from *The Wizard Of Oz*, and Zafarou Ballogou isn't the answer to a leftover puzzle from *Wheel Of Fortune*. In fact, Togo is a hot, tropical country of West Africa, and "Jaffa" Ballogou is its best fighter. It's not every day that Togo receives an opportunity to crown its first-ever world champion. Ballogou gave it a helluva try, but ultimately, he lacked the class to unseat Liles.

Defending the WBA super middleweight title for the sixth time, the southpaw Liles built a huge lead, then coasted to the wire, defeating Ballogou by unanimous decision at the Nashville Arena.

The 32-year-old Liles, 166¼, Las Vegas, Nevada, kept a comfortable distance against Ballogou, 167½, Bronx, New York, via Lome, Togo, who repeatedly struck the champion behind the head. Most of the legal blows were landed by Liles, who scored with hooks and right-lefts. Ballogou featured a world-class chin and exceptional stamina, but he lacked technique and was sloppy in his aggressiveness.

Ballogou, 29, was hurt for the first time in the eighth, during which Liles struck with big lefts. Ballogou began backing up, and in the ninth he initiated a handful of clinches. But even when he seemed on the verge of getting dropped or stopped, the challenger kept coming forward.

Late in the ninth, Ballogou delivered a wide right. When the fighters' feet tangled, Liles went down. Referee Anthony Bryant (USA) ruled a knockdown, and Liles immediately protested the call.

The 10th was a quiet round. In the 11th, Bryant finally penalized Ballogou, 33-3 (28) with 1 no-contest, for rabbit punching. Looking uncomfortable and disgusted, Liles, 31-1 (19) with 1 no-contest, forgot to fight back in the 12th, during which Ballogou staggered him with a left. With 25 seconds remaining in the round, Liles lost a point for excessive holding.

The uneven finish aside, the outcome was never in doubt. Harmodio Cedeno (Panama) scored 118-109, Bill Dye (USA) 115-110, and Adelmo Bonfanti (Venezuela) 117-111. THE RING had it much closer, favoring Liles by 114-112.

"I anticipated a tough battle; I knew he was a big puncher who was gonna be coming at me," said Liles, who is hoping for a showdown with Steve Collins. "I'm a boxer, he's a puncher. I can't take anything away from him."

The bout was televised by Showtime.

Promoter: Don King

(7-19-97)

Antonio Cermeno KO 12 Yuichi Kasai

Yokohama, Japan: Lanky speedster Cermeno utilized his long reach and superior speed, finishing Kasai at 2:35 of the last round to retain the WBA junior featherweight title at Yokohama Arena. It was his sixth defense.

This was a return bout; Cermeno had outpointed Kasai in Las Vegas last December.

The 28-year-old Cermeno, 122, Venezuela, dominated the first two rounds with sharp jabs and left-right combos. Kasai, 122, Japan, began working in round three, aiming primarily for the champion's midsection. His goal was to work inside, but Cermeno effectively kept the challenger at arm's length.

Kasai, 27, was in command in the sixth, but Cermeno caught him with a flurry in the seventh. Cermeno, 28-1 (17), switched his attack to the body in the eighth. He strayed low, prompting referee

Rafael Ramos (USA) to deduct a point.

Somewhat desperate, Kasai fought back in the 10th and 11th, digging hard to the body. To his credit, he tried for a come-from-behind kayo in the 12th. Cermeno was initially defensive, but when he set himself and volleyed, he caught Kasai with a long left hook and a vicious right uppercut. *Boom!* Kasai, 24-4-1 (16), was unconscious before he hit the deck. He was carried from the ring on a stretcher, but regained consciousness soon after.

After 11 rounds, Cermeno led on all three cards, with Guy Jutras (Canada) scoring 106-103, Rodolfo Maldonado (Panama) 107-102, and Lou Tabat (USA) 107-101.

Kasai announced his retirement after the defeat.

Promoter: Teiken Promotions

(7-26-97)

Joe Koizumi

Steve Johnston W 12 Hiroyuki Sakamoto

Yokohama, Japan: Crafty lefty Johnston played matador against the bullish Sakamoto, outclassing him to retain the WBC lightweight title in his first defense by split decision before some 15,000 spectators at Yokohama Arena.

It was a lopsided affair from the outset. The 24-year-old Johnston, 134½, Denver, Colorado, avoided the challenger's opening attacks and countered with jabs and straight lefts. Sakamoto, 135, Japan, whose specialty is a sweeping hook, all too often delivered wild punches. Shorter by three inches, the 5'4" Johnston bobbed, weaved, ducked, and sidestepped almost all of the punches.

The bout was rather monotonous, with Sakamoto, 27-2 (20), chasing unsuccessfully and the mobile Johnston, 22-0 (13), stopping to counter with precision. Sakamoto's stamina was excellent, but he lacked the technique to trouble Johnston.

Alfredo Asaro (France) and David Chung (South Korea) scored for Johnston by 119-111 and 117-111, respectively. Ray Solis (Mexico) inexplicably disagreed, favoring Sakamoto by 115-113.

Promoter: Teiken Promotions

(7-26-97)

Joe Koizumi

Naseem Hamed KO 2 Juan Gerardo Cabrera

London, England: In terms of power, boxing ability, ring generalship, and every other relevant criteria, Hamed completely outclassed late replacement Cabrera before 7,000 fans at Wembley Arena. Hamed's IBF featherweight title was not at stake.

Appearing for the first time on free TV in America, the 23-year-old Hamed provided a show. Bob Yalen, the boxing boss at ABC, which aired the fight on *Wide World Of Sports*, estimated that eight million viewers tuned in. "Naz is the true package," he said. "It will be tough to find somebody who can truly stand up to him at featherweight. But we were happy with the show."

Promoter Frank Warren believes the only matches that will extend Hamed, 125¾, Sheffield, England, even if only slightly, are unification bouts with WBA champion Wilfredo Vazquez and WBC titlist Luisito Espinosa. Certainly, nothing Cabrera, 125, Cordoba, Argentina, brought to the ring threatened Hamed's superiority. Indeed, he had been sparring with Hamed's original foe, the undefeated Pastor Maurin. As it was, Cabrera, 22, won in the semifinals of the Boxcino tournament just a couple of weeks before squaring off with Hamed.

Hamed's initial outburst left little doubt that the little Yemeni could end it as soon as he liked. Cabrera, 24-3 (20), had stoic resolve, but that was all. He didn't land a significant punch on Hamed, 27-0 (25), to either head or body. On the other hand, Hamed's punches had all the impact of a wrecking ball, forcing Cabrera to the ropes, from where he could attempt only to cover up.

The southpaw Hamed introduced his lead right uppercut halfway through the first round, snapping back Cabrera's head. He repeated the punch throughout the second, and Cabrera, his face reddening, did well to stay upright. Hamed began to potshot, and soon Cabrera was bleeding from a cut at the corner of his left eye. When a right and a cruel left rattled against Cabrera's head, the Argentine wobbled, prompting referee Lou Moret (USA) to call a halt at the 2:17 mark.

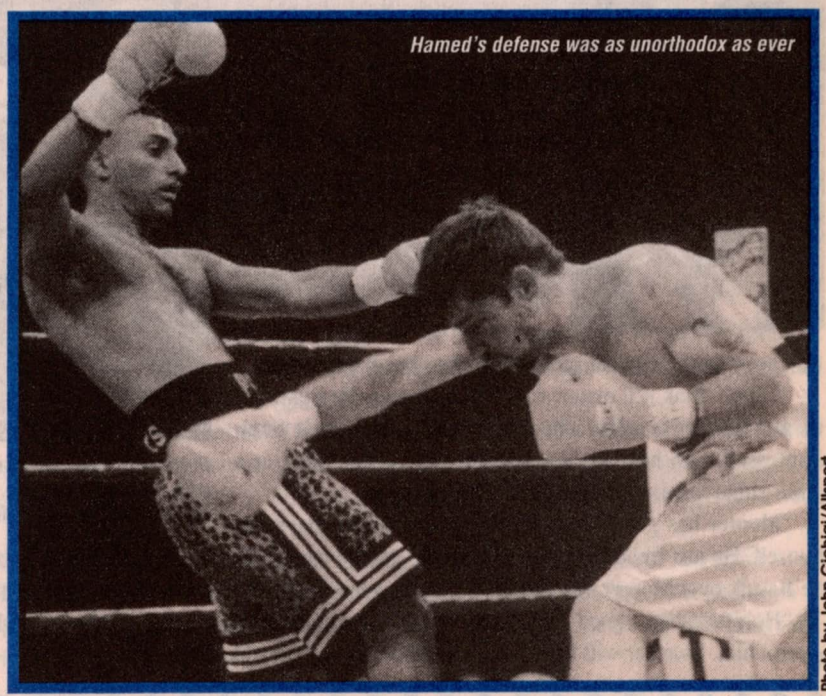
Once again, Hamed had called the round of his triumph.

"I'm carrying out my predictions, so where's my credit?" demanded Hamed afterward. "I can't wait to go over to America to show them my ability, my style, and sell out a few venues. I'd love to sell out at the MGM Grand, but I'd like to box at Madison Square Garden first."

The IBF has issued Hamed an ultimatum to defend against mandatory challenger Hector Lizarraga. Warren, however, has no interest in such a matchup.

(7-19-97)

Brian Doogan ■



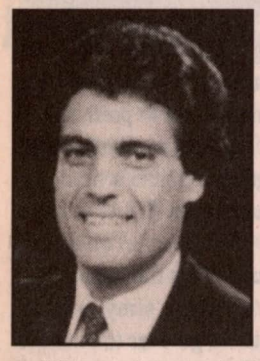
Hamed's defense was as unorthodox as ever

Photo by John Gichigi/Allsport

THE RING'S QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH

Compiled by Thad Moore

Q: WAS THE REVOCATION OF MIKE TYSON'S BOXING LICENSE THE PROPER DISCIPLINARY MEASURE?



Nick Charles, CNN Sports: "The Nevada State Athletic Commission was swift and stern. I think they did the right thing. I don't know what else they could have done. Tyson deserved it. He has to clean up his act as a human being. Maybe they could've been more specific in terms of outlining specific guidelines. I think they could have been more clear regarding psychological testing.

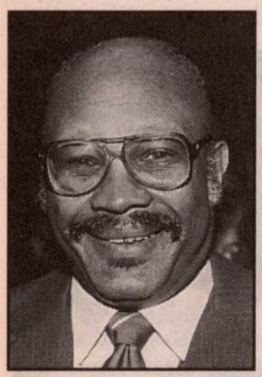
"They could have been more specific in forcing Tyson to prove his suitability. This was a quote/unquote *crime*. If the commission takes him to task and makes him prove he's a changed human being, then they've done a good job.

"Tyson is a 31-year-old guy who is responsible for his actions. If you say he's insecure and needs a lot of people around him, that's a copout. I think he should undergo counseling.

"His skills have been on the decline for a while. This isn't going to help. The four-year layoff didn't help either. In the second Holyfield fight, he didn't look much better than he had in the first.

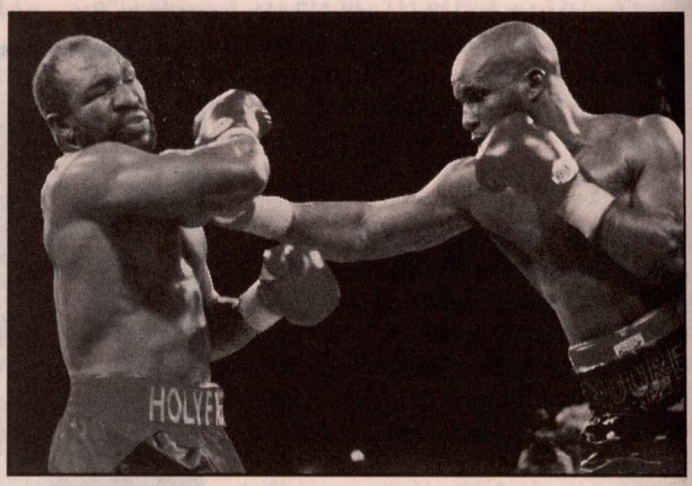
"We may have made Tyson out to be better than he really was. He may go down in history as a guy who beat a lot of mediocre fighters. Maybe if he's humbled and builds some kind of moral base, then his behavior can change."

Q: MICHAEL MOORER BEAT EVANDER HOLYFIELD ONCE. HOW MUCH OF A THREAT IS HE TO DO IT AGAIN?



Curtis Cokes, trainer and former welterweight champion: "I don't think Moorer throws enough punches to beat anybody. He's too laid back, not active enough. Evander would take him out of there. He's just too busy for Moorer. Moorer was a much better fighter as a light heavyweight. I thought he was a *great* fighter at light heavyweight. Now he's just a survivor. You have to get into the trenches to beat Holyfield, and Moorer does just enough to win.

"I don't think it'll matter who trains Moorer. He fights not to get tired. He offers no movement. I haven't been impressed with him the last two or three years. He's at a point in his career where he doesn't enjoy boxing.



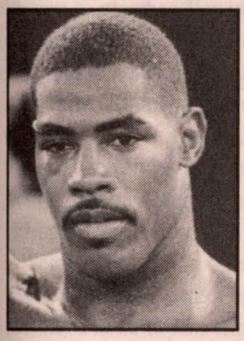
During his 1994 points win over Evander Holyfield, Michael Moorer dominated with his southpaw jab. Will Moorer again outbox "The Real Deal," or will Holyfield avenge his defeat, as he did in upsetting Riddick Bowe?

"Moorer has got to want to prove something, maybe to himself. He just fights to get in and out and get his money. Holyfield's mindset is to be aggressive. He's very sharp and on a roll. I think he'll walk over Moorer this time. Holyfield is one of the greatest heavyweights of all-time.

"Holyfield has a good right hand, left hook, and jab. He's a better all-around fighter than Moorer. I think he'll make the fight and swarm him. Evander will have him out of there in eight or nine rounds."

What do boxing's insiders think of the hot issues? Each month, we'll come up with four questions, then grill the experts. If there's a topic you'd like examined, send your question to The Ring, Questions Of The Month, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034

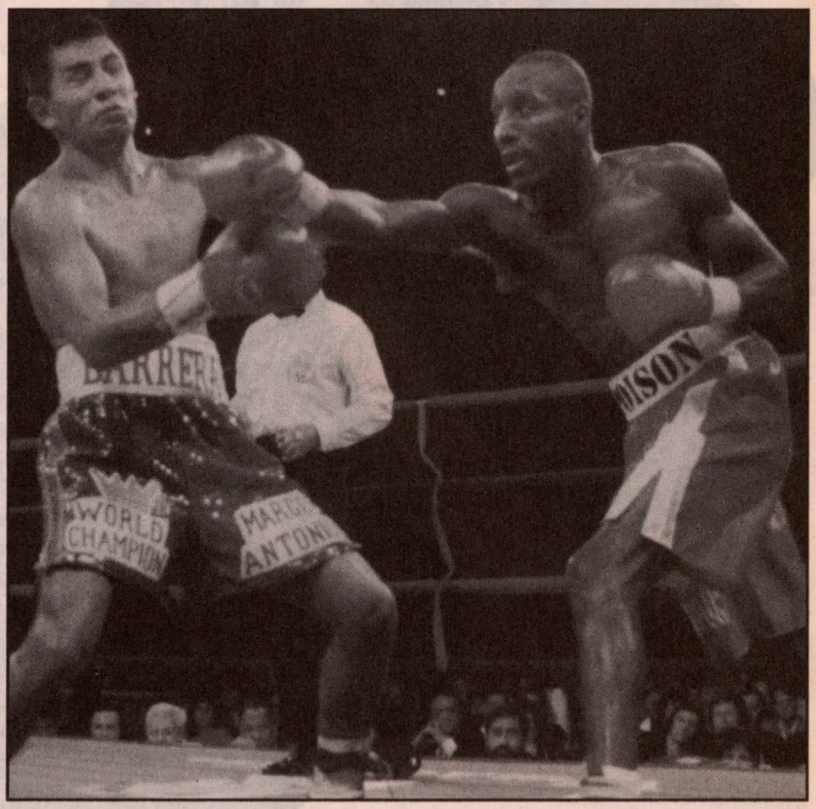
Q: IF NASEEM HAMED FIGHTS JUNIOR JONES, WHO WOULD WIN AND WHY?



Tom Johnson, former IBF featherweight champion: "I think Naseem would beat Junior. He would eventually overpower Junior and stop him in the late rounds. Hamed is a fairly good puncher, but I've boxed punchers before who hit harder than him. He also likes to use illegal tactics, as he did when he fought me.

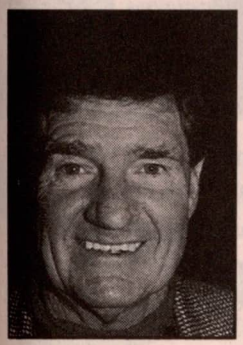
"The accuracy of where a shot is placed is the most important factor in having power. Junior is a very good puncher. He's also a good boxer. He's now coming into his own. He knows what he wants to do in the ring. He's becoming a good all-around fighter. He's got a good jab and boxing ability and can use that to his advantage.

"If Junior uses his jab and right hand, he'll do well. If he keeps Naseem on the end of his punches, he can knock him out. It depends on which two fighters show up in the ring. The fighter who lands the bigger shots will dictate the tempo and win. If I had to make a pick, I'd go with Hamed."



If Junior Jones is strong enough to have downed Marco Antonio Barrera, will he be able to kayo England's Naseem Hamed? Conversely, will Jones absorb Hamed's biggest hits without falling?

Q: WHO IS BOXING'S BEST TELEVISION ANALYST?



Jay Searcy, boxing writer for *The Philadelphia Inquirer*: "The most entertaining is George Foreman. He brings a fighter's perspective which makes it interesting to me. I didn't like him at first. Over time he's gotten very confident. He goes a little deeper than most other analysts.

"He picks up on things that both Merchant and Lampley don't pick up on. He seems a little bit fresher than the rest. A lot of analysts tell you things you already know. They tell you advanced news. George can put his finger on what is actually going on in a fight. He brings the perspective of someone who's been there.

"He passes on what a fighter might be thinking while he is in the ring to the fan. He has the knack to go directly to the point. He's very comfortable. He's not as wordy as others. He tells you what you want to know without him wasting your time. I find that usually he is right on the money. He's very knowledgeable about the sport of boxing." ■

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Tapia–Romero

(Continued from page 23)

powerpunches upstairs in the sixth, seventh, and eighth rounds, while Tapia became more defensive, backing up and willing to counter. Romero landed a right to the temple early in the seventh, leading Tapia to crumble sarcastically to the canvas.

Despite Tapia's clowning, the fighters were gaining respect for each other. After an accidental headbutt in the seventh forced Halpern to examine Romero, Tapia hollered across the ring, "You okay, Danny?"

Tapia's confidence returned in the ninth, as he began to unleash the speedy combinations that won him the early rounds. Romero's face was showing the wear, with swelling around both eyes and blood trickling from his left nostril.

Setting the tone for the rest of the fight, Tapia paid more attention to the camera than his corner before the 10th. He turned his head away from Reid and told the world, "I love you, Albuquerque." He was loose for the rest of the bout, sticking out his tongue and grinning at Romero while hitting him from all angles to pull away on the cards. "I think I frustrated the heck out him," Tapia said. "I didn't want to knock him out. I wanted to punish him."

At the end of the spirited 11th, during which Romero threw numerous haymakers in an attempt to shift the momentum, Tapia attempted to cradle his rival's head. Halpern, however, shooed him away. Instead of hugging his foe, Tapia settled for another tongue-wag.

At the final bell, both fighters were standing, at least until Tapia turned his trademark backflip. The crowd was pleased, reflecting the sentiment of the boxing community. "Ladies and gentlemen, you've just witnessed what the sport of boxing is all about," ring announcer Mark Beiro said. The fans cheered louder.

Jerry Roth and Dr. Clark Sammartino scored 116-112 and Glen Hamada 115-113. (All three judges are from the USA). THE RING scored for Tapia as well, 117-111.

"I thought I won the fight," Romero said. "I don't know what they wanted from me." But the CompuBox numbers supported the judges. Romero, 30-2 (27), threw more punches, 704-653, but was out-hit, 259-240. Tapia, 41-0-2 (24), landed more jabs, 116-106, and more powerpunches, 143-134.

It seemed a bit odd, but there stood Tapia, a man of ill repute, serving at least one night as the savior of boxing. Upon further examination, however, maybe it wasn't so strange. One needed only to look at the symbolism Tapia outwardly displays. He wore his traditional "Mi Vida Loca" trunks (My Crazy Life), which reminds him where he has been. He also displayed his two large tattoos (the Sacred Heart on his chest, the Virgin Mary on his back), which reminds him where he wants to be.

"I refuse to go down. I refuse to lose," Tapia said. His wife, Teresa, stood nearby, holding his newly won belt. "I've overcome everything. I struggled to keep my dream alive. I did what I had to do, and I was successful."

Tapia broke down in tears several times after the fight. He dedicated the victory to his mother, who was kidnapped, raped, hung, and stabbed to death with an ice pick. The murder remains unsolved. "I miss her," Tapia said, gazing upward with a raised fist. "I did it for you, Mom."

Having seemingly accomplished the ultimate, where does Tapia go from here? Although no other major paydays seem to exist inside the 115-pound division, Tapia insisted he would remain at junior bantam. "I'm the best at my weight," he said. "I think I should stay there." Tapia, who earned $450,000, also noted he would not give Romero ($400,000) a rematch. "It was too easy," he said. "It was a good, smart, clean fight—and it was easy. It was the easiest fight of my life. I have nothing to prove." Kushner, however, predicted the two would meet again within a year. A rematch is likely to take place in Albuquerque.

If Tapia-Romero II does come off, the storylines remain; the out-of-ring differences between the camps remain unsettled. Before leaving the ring, Tapia attempted to reconcile his differences with the Romeros. "Let me live my life, and let him live his," Tapia said. "Let bygones be bygones." But as he walked to Romero's corner, Tapia claims Danny Sr. waved him away. "He was an ass after the fight," Tapia said of the Martin Sheen lookalike. "I wanted to say 'Keep your head up.' [Romero Sr.] can go to hell."

Well, maybe he doesn't talk like a savior, but for at least one night, Tapia performed like one when boxing needed it most. ■

Tim Graham covers boxing for the Las Vegas Sun.

Holyfield

(Continued from page 26)

Why, then, would *anybody* think Moorer has even a tater tot of a chance of again beating Holyfield? Try this for an answer: Because he's not Mike Tyson.

"I think Michael has a shot," said Atlas. "At this level, styles do dictate fights. Michael lends some problems Tyson doesn't. Tyson is looking for one punch, trying to make the fight easy. Michael has the mindset to go rounds. He'll be on the outside with the jab, and he won't give Evander counterpunching opportunities."

With Moorer, it's the jab first, last, always, and more often than not. If his opponent is seeing double, it's because Moorer is tossing 'em two at a time. Unlike most southpaws, he's a natural right-hander, so it's no surprise that his lead hand, and not his left, is his primary source of power.

Forget for a moment that while fight fans yearn for gangsta rap, Moorer's recent efforts have been the softest of lullabies. The fact is he's a technically skilled boxer, arguably the best in the division. Forget about the image Steward promoted and projected in trying to make Moorer the monster of the Kronk. And while you're at it, forget about the early-'90s brawls with Bert Cooper and Alex Stewart. For Moorer, fighting carefully is fighting smart. And if fighting smart is fighting boring, he's not gonna fight the rap.

In a physical sense, there's every reason to believe both heavyweights are capable of a prime effort. More intriguing—and more difficult to analyze—are the psychological angles. If it's to Moorer's advantage that he's already beaten Holyfield, it's to Holyfield's advantage that he's motivated by revenge. In his victory over Holyield, Moorer controlled the pace. Or was it more a case of Holyfield falling asleep at the wheel? Regardless of the extent of his injuries and illnesses, The Real Deal didn't feel it that night.

"Holyfield is motivated because Michael is one of the guys who beat him," said Don Turner. "Evander is a very unique individual. A lot of different things motivate him. With the first Tyson fight, it was the things Tyson said he was gonna do to Evander. What motivates Evander this time is that Moorer beat him when he wasn't well."

Working against Holyfield is what's known in thoroughbred racing as the bounce

theory. When a horse produces the best race of his career, he is likely to "bounce" backward his next time out by running a stinker. Holyfield may be a triple-crown winner, but he's also a two-legged symbol of the bounce theory. After rejecting the challenge of George Foreman, he barely edged Bert Cooper. After regaining the title from Riddick Bowe, he lost it to Moorer. After making a triumphant return vs. Ray Mercer, he got kayoed by Bowe. And then there have been the reverse-bounces: His first victory over Tyson followed a flat effort vs. Bobby Czyz. Handicapping this guy is more difficult than figuring two-year-old fillies.

After two career-defining fights against Tyson, will Holyfield bounce again? And if Holyfield bounces, will Moorer pounce? Turner doesn't think so. "With the mindset he's in now, Evander can have a lot of fun doing what he does," said the trainer. "He's got the sweetest, greatest wife in the world, and her support is a key. Evander's beaten the best and wants to maintain being the best. He's one of the greatest heavyweight champions of all-time. He knows the ball is in his park, and he has to play a good game each time."

As for Moorer, it's fair to question whether he still wants to play the game at all. As of this writing, he didn't even have a trainer. (Moorer's first choice was Steward.) Will the significance of a Holyfield rematch wake him from the living dead? Or is he too far gone?

"I think he'll be very up for this fight," said John Davimos, Holyfield's manager. "I have a strange feeling he'll let it go this time. It's a big fight against a guy he's beaten already. Michael has a lot of confidence. Remember, he was on the verge of stopping Evander last time."

In the final analysis, maybe we shouldn't be concerned with pushing the needle on the action meter. Maybe we should settle for the fact that Holyfield-Moorer II doesn't figure to include ear-biting, excessive holding, nervous breakdowns in ring-center, or cardiac arrest, real, imagined, or misdiagnosed. Of course, if Moorer continues his recent form, there's another risk: Holyfield dozing off between rounds.

A question the WBA and IBF should consider at the rules meeting: If a heavyweight champion falls asleep in the ring, does he lose his title? ■

New Faces

(Continued from page 18)

brother Cirillo Jr., a professional welterweight, into the ring. His father, Cirillo Sr., grounded his then-45-pound son in the techniques of boxing, not slugging: "Hit and don't be hit, make points and don't stand in front of the other guy, don't get into the ropes, use angles."

Morel didn't lose in his first 50 bouts, and as a member of the Puerto Rican team at the 1992 Junior World Championships was runner-up in the 106-pound class. "I decided then I had some kind of potential," Morel says.

Later that same year, another brother, Henry, was a student at the University of Wisconsin medical school in Madison, and Morel moved to the Badger State capital to live with him. Morel and his father, who would soon bring the whole family to live in Madison, went scouting out local boxing gyms and met Lynch at the Muscles & Fitness emporium on the city's west side.

A former amateur and pro boxer with a University of Wisconsin degree in economics and sociology, Lynch was an assistant coach in the late-'50s for the UW ring squads that were the scourge of NCAA boxing until its demise in 1960. He worked with and learned from legendary head coaches John Walsh and Verne Woodword, and twice the U.S. State Department has tapped Lynch to provide boxing instruction to amateur ring programs in Sudan and Indonesia.

The day he met the Morels, Lynch watched Eric work on the bags and then held the pads for him for a round—long enough, he says, for it to become "real clear that he was a real gem that had just dropped in my lap."

"Eric was a finished product and had been taught everything perfectly, just like John Walsh taught it at UW," he says. "His balance was exceptional, he threw good, straight punches, and had good, sensible movement.

"I'm just smart enough that I didn't screw him up."

Then the iron-rich Wisconsin water, or whatever it was, went to work on the transplanted Madisonion. In his 72 amateur matches before he left Puerto Rico, Morel scored only eight knockouts. By the time he was done with the amateurs, having compiled a mark of 123-13, and having won a National Golden Gloves 106-pound title in 1994, more than half of his bouts had ended early.

The culmination of his amateur career, of course, was making the U.S. Trials, and then squeaking by Detroit's Ramases Patterson to become the American representative at 112 pounds. He was expected to do well at the Games, and was so confident of at least advancing to the medal round that he told his family not to come to Atlanta until after his first bout.

Consequently, they missed seeing Morel eliminated on points (24-12) in the opening round by eventual gold medalist Maikro Romero of Cuba.

"I was confused," Morel says of the fight. "I had a slow start. My coaches were telling me one thing, and I had in mind another. I felt bad, because a lot of people thought I could get at least a bronze, and I was working so hard to get a medal.

"But it's over, and you just keep going on and forget about the past. It was great because of the fact that thousands compete to make it [to the Olympics], and just 12 of us could make it. I made the team and represented the USA as hard as I could, and couldn't do it."

Morel's disappointing performance in Atlanta caused some ring railbirds to shake their heads at his prospects in the pro game, but there was no shortage of promoters lining up to court him after the Olympics. Morel, Lynch, and Cirillo Sr. picked Top Rank, signing a five-year contract that so far has been beneficial to all parties.

"Top Rank gave us a fair contract and opportunity," Lynch says, "and Eric's on his way." In fact, he adds, "Bob Arum overpaid us on two of our first eight fights without even being asked for it."

Morel turned pro with a third-round kayo of Jose Luis Aguilar in October 1996, and after three more bouts had fought a total of only six rounds. A flashing right hand, usually coming at the end of a dazzling combination, accounted for most of the wreckage, and even some who had low-rated Morel's abilities on the basis of his quick Olympic exit began to re-check their math.

"They're probably surprised that I'm doing great because of the fact that I didn't get the gold medal; they thought I wasn't gonna do good as a pro," says Morel.

He's confident he would've ended his seventh and eighth bouts early, too, if pay-per-view television's time constraints hadn't done it first. Morel won unanimous decisions after both bouts were shortened to four rounds.

(Continued on page 72)

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New Faces

(Continued from page 70)

In his eighth fight, Morel faced Armando Diaz on the Oscar De La Hoya-David Kamau undercard in San Antonio. Diaz is a veteran who had previously gone the distance over the main event route against such worthies as Tom Johnson and Eric Griffin. He also presented the additional challenge of a southpaw stance. But Morel dominated throughout and was adjudged an easy winner in the truncated match.

While he says he doesn't try to copy anybody else's style in the ring, Morel professes great admiration for De La Hoya.

"He's a great boxer and knows what boxing's all about," he says. "He wants six titles in six different weight classes, has got four already [if you count the lightly regarded WBO title], and that's not easy."

Morel will happily settle for titles at 115, 118, and 122 pounds, but "if they got a world title fight for me at 112, I'll come down to 112." Unmarried, he graduated last year from Madison West High School and is employed as a floor cleaner at a Holiday Inn in Madison. The native Puerto Rican who had said just two years ago that the gruesome Wisconsin winters would eventually drive him back to a warmer clime, now not only says he is a Cheesehead for life, but that when he goes back to San Juan or to places like San Antonio, the weather is too hot.

In spite of his growing success and fame—he was swamped by autograph-seekers at a recent amateur card near Milwaukee—Morel insists his life isn't much changed yet. "I'm still the same guy I was before the Olympics," he says. "I do exactly the same things I used to do: work out, work, and be with my family."

His respectfulness and good nature, 1996 U.S. Olympic coach Al Mitchell told Lynch, made Morel the classiest and easiest kid to work with on the American team in Atlanta. "Eric is absolute zero trouble," Lynch himself says. "In fact, his consideration of me is so much more than you would expect."

The combination of Morel's mannerliness outside the ropes and his skills inside may not have been seen since the heyday of three-division former world champion Alexis Arguello, who also happens to be high on the Wisconsin boxer's prospects and who provided Morel with one of the biggest highlights of his career.

It was after Morel had scored his second straight win, a kayo on the undercard of a Johnny Tapia bout in Albuquerque, New Mexico, last year.

"After the [Tapia] fight he was signing autographs," recalls Morel. "I asked him if he saw my fight, and he took my right hand and went down on one knee and said, 'Just keep doing what you're doing and stick with the people who have brought you this far. You are going to be champion of the world.'

"Every time I think about that," says Morel, "it makes me work harder." ■

Pete Ehrmann, a frequent contributor to The Ring, is based in West Allis, Wisconsin.

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LaMotta

(Continued from page 41)

allel. What would it be? Primo Camera tutoring Max Baer in scansion? Perhaps it is Bob Dylan who should here be given the last word, from his appropriately bad "I Shall Be Free No. 10," recorded in 1964, the year that Clay took first the heavyweight title from Sonny Liston and then the name Muhammad Ali, bestowed on him by the Black Muslim leader Elijah Muhammad: "Well, I was shadowboxin' with myself one day/ I figured I was ready for Cassius Clay/ Well, fe-fi-fo-fum/ Cassius Clay, here I come."

Gene Tunney of Greenwich Village, the heavyweight champion from 1926 to 1928, was the exception: a fighter who could write. He would have been my failed buddy's ideal patron. A reader of Shakespeare and student of Plato, Tunney actually wrote his own book, without a ghostwriter, co-author, or as-told-to hireling. "Every heavyweight champion inherits biographers," he said, but he resolved to write his own story: "It may not be great literature, but it will be the truth." Published in 1932, *A Man Must Fight* was a good and generally honest book in which Tunney did not shy away from the dark side of the boxing game—the "gangsters and sure-thing gamblers," the "cold-blooded managers, agents,

and split-commission men"—albeit with a tone of self-righteous denunciation that at times brings to mind words from his beloved Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: "The lady doth protest too much, methinks."

(Those interested in Tunney's subsequent literary endeavors are referred to *The Reader's Digest* of December 1941, where will be found his "Nicotine Knockout, Or The Slow Count," a tirade upon the health hazards of smoking, in which Tunney allies himself with the author of *War and Peace*, declaring, "I can only ask, with Tolstoy: 'Why do men stupefy themselves with tobacco?'")

Tunney's autobiography was a watershed of boxing literature, and can be seen as a forebear of all first-person boxing books to follow, from Joe Louis' *My Life Story* (1947), written "with the editorial aid of Chester L. Washington and Haskell Cohen," to *Dempsey* (1960), "by the Man Himself as told to Bob Considine and Bill Slocum."

Most notably, *A Man Must Fight* can be seen as a forebear of *Somebody Up There Likes Me: My Life Until Today*, the Rocky Graziano autobiography that became a sensation almost a quarter of a century later. Like Tunney's other literary successors, Graziano told his story through another, the *Sports Illustrated* writer Rowland Barber. Romanticized and dramatized as his tale was, Graziano was more unflinching in his working of the dark ground that Tunney had broken, and *Somebody Up There Likes Me* possessed the faux "gritty realism" that so appealed to the sensibilities of the day. Acclaimed upon its 1955 publication, it became in 1956 a best-selling paperback and a hit movie. At 34, and four years after his last fight, the middleweight was on top of the world, flourishing anew as a cultural icon.

The success of *Somebody Up There Likes Me* inspired another publisher to give another, older former champion a shot. Barney Ross had held both the lightweight and welterweight titles simultaneously in the '30s, had become a war hero, then a junkie. His *No Man Stands Alone*, written with the journalist Martin Abramson, was an expanded version of the Barney Ross story, "God Was In My Corner," published 10 years before in *Coronet*, after he had kicked his addiction at the Lexington clinic. Ross' book sank rather than rose in the 1957 wake of *Somebody Up There Likes Me*, which, as a title, now seems curiously not a far cry from "God Was In My Corner." *Monkey On My Back*, the movie version of the Ross story, likewise foundered.

And then there was Jake LaMotta, whom nobody up there seemed to like, who stood alone, who did not feel the presence of God in his corner.

Born July 10, 1921, Jake was a son of immigrant parents who settled in the northern part of the Lower East Side that has come to be known, by the unknowing, as the East Village. Before moving to the Bronx, LaMotta ran with Graziano, who then was still Rocco Barbella, another son of the Lower East Side, not much younger than Jake. As boys, they were thieves together, and they did time together at Coxsackie, upstate. Rocky became the middleweight champion of the world in 1947, Jake in 1949. But less than a decade later, when Rocky was riding high with the success of *Somebody Up There Likes Me*, Jake was on the skids, heading for the bottom. His own autobiography would come more than a decade later.

Raging Bull: My Story was published, to some enthusiastic reviews but little public

(Continued on page 74)

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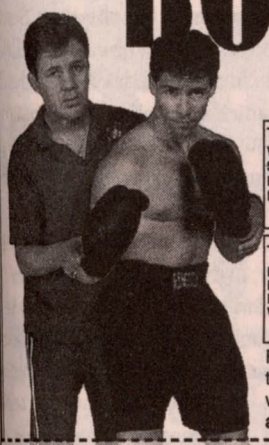

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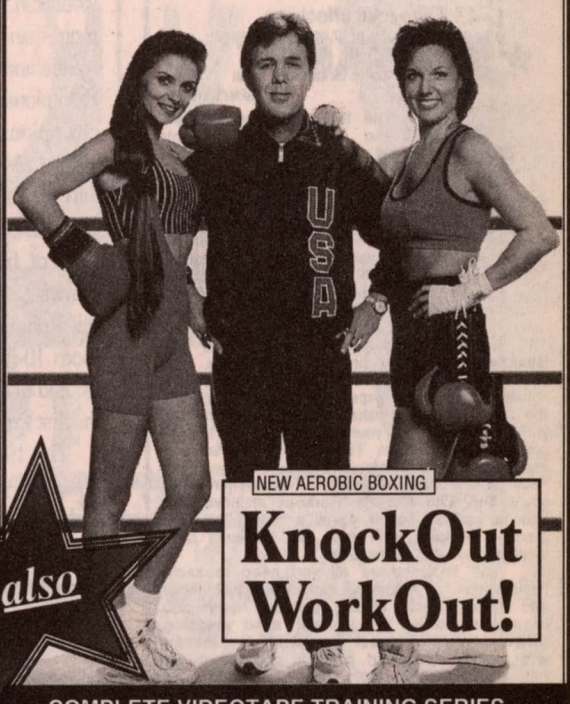

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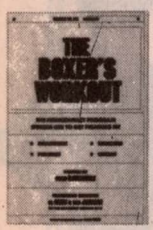

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LaMotta

(Continued from page 73)

notice, in 1970, in hardcover by Prentice-Hall, and then as an Award paperback. The paperback, which substituted a Kent Menthol advertising insert for the hardcover edition's photo spread, used as a selling point on its back cover a quotation from *Publishers Weekly*: "Four-letter words stick out of the hot prose like coat hooks." Coat hooks.

The book's co-authors of record were an odd pairing. Joseph Carter, who died in 1984, was a Boston-born, Harvard-educated journalist whose other books included *A Hagiography Of Italian Renaissance Painting* and *A History Of The French Constitution*. Peter Savage was not so much a writer as an old friend and business associate of LaMotta; as Pete Petrella, he appears throughout the book as one of the main characters in Jake's life.

LaMotta turned pro in 1941, and by 1943, though Tony Zale was the middleweight champ, Nat Fleischer of THE RING declared LaMotta to be the best of the 160-pounders, a judgment maintained by Fleischer and THE RING for the next two years. Jake's most legendary fights were his six with Sugar Ray Robinson. Like LaMotta, Robinson fought in more than one weight class, as both a welterweight and a middleweight, holding the former championship from 1946 to 1951, and the latter championship five times between 1951 and 1960. LaMotta, in his first bout with Robinson, was one of 14 fighters Robinson disposed of 1942. Their second match, however, was the upset of 1943. Written off after seven rounds, LaMotta, a 3-1 underdog, came from behind to fell Robinson in the eighth and win a unanimous 10-round decision. For Robinson, it was the end of a three-year, 40-fight winning streak, the first loss of his professional career.

This 1943 victory exemplified LaMotta as a boxer, as one who would not quit, one who endured, one who came back against all odds to vanquish, one for whom fury and finesse were but the arsis and thesis of what seemed more nature than style. His fists were notoriously small and did not seem to possess the power of brutality, but they were the vessels of a will and a force to be reckoned with.

"Jake's hands don't show violence," said Gabrielle Barnett, a sculptor who hand-casted him in 1992. "I hate to say this, but they're almost feminine. They're very smooth and very delicate. It's remarkable that those fists were able to do so much damage."

In 1949, those fists took the middleweight title from Marcel Cerdan; and, as fate had it, his arch-rival, Sugar Ray, stripped LaMotta of that title with a 13-round beating in Chicago Stadium on Valentine's Day, 1951, a beating that was as much a testament to the ferocious endurance of LaMotta as to the prowess of Sugar Ray. "I lost the fight," Jake would say wryly, "but I was the happiest guy in Chicago Stadium—that fight's purse was the biggest money I ever made in the ring."

LaMotta's accounts in *Raging Bull* of his battles with Robinson, and of other fights, are terrific. But *Raging Bull* is far more than a book of fight stories, just as it is far more than the usual gritty-reality hokum. As Jake's endurance in the ring was a rare human testament, so is *Raging Bull*: a glimpse into a soul that lay lurking beneath a blinding storm of—yes, the title is perfect—rage, a rage born of the furies of fear and willfulness. The wisp of greatness it possesses has nothing to do with literature (though, to be sure, literary reputations have been built on worse works); it has to do with that glimpse, and with the vivid evocation of the storm.

LaMotta's autobiography begins with greed and violence, as he recounts his adolescent mugging of a local Bronx bookie. He raps the guy in the head with a foot and a half of lead pipe, and the guy's failure to go down angers young LaMotta. "I wanted to kill him. I was so mad that he was still up, and I began to hit him again and again. And finally he collapsed." The next day, Jake comes across a newspaper item reporting the discovery of the bookie's body, and Jake feels himself succumb to a secret guilt that would follow him through the years. "I never went to church, the priests couldn't scare me with all that crap about hell, but somehow I knew, inside of me somehow I knew that I'd pay for it." Later, in the joint, he contemplates absolution. "I don't know what the ground rules are about confessing a murder to a prison chaplain, but I wasn't about to find out the hard way."

Jake's loss of sexual innocence, which came later, is recalled in terms that are at once carnal, criminal, and comical. "I got her in a lock where she could hardly move and I shoved my hat in her face so she couldn't talk and pushed her down and got on her. Not what you'd call a real big romantic deal, but most women only got one thing going for them anyway, so why screw around?"

(Continued on page 76)

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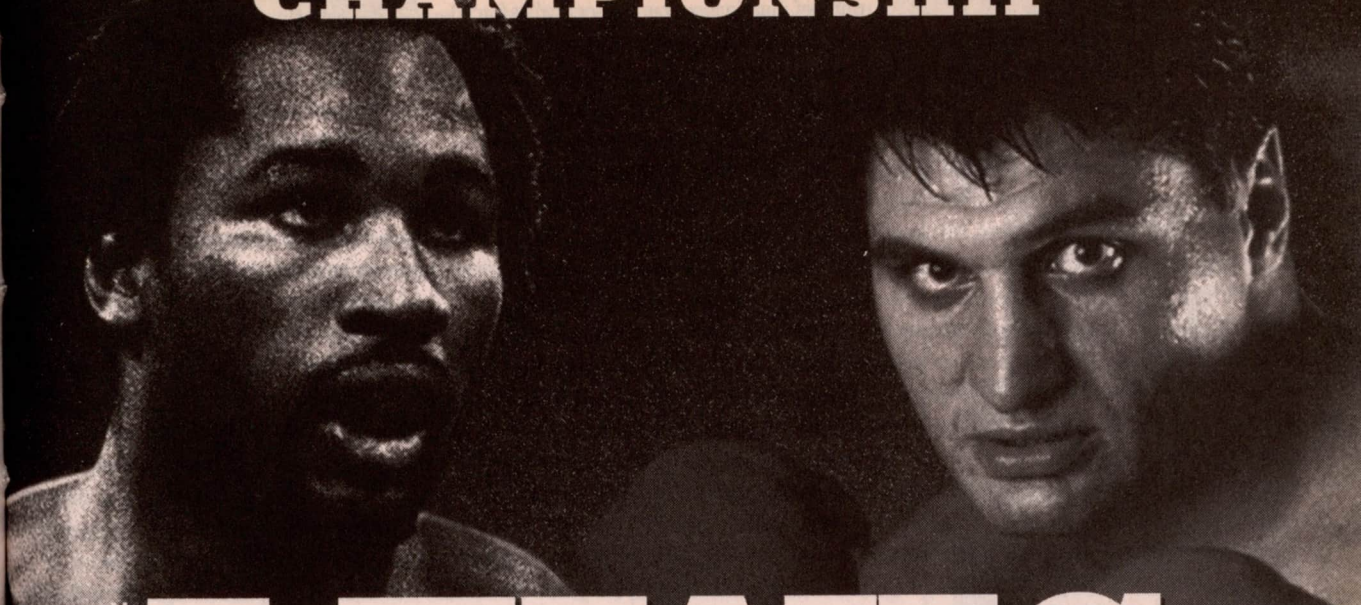

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LaMotta

(Continued from page 74)

He sees women as a curse that he could not live without. "My basic trouble was that I got married more than I should, not that I'm saying anything against any of my wives," he explains. He almost kills one of them in a drunken blackout, comes to, finds her lying there battered and apparently lifeless. "If you want my opinion, she's dead," his brother, Joey, tells him. Jake seems less troubled by the thought of having murdered his wife than by the deed's potentially ruinous effect on his boxing career. "Beautiful. Absolutely beautiful. A minimum of three years." But Joey has an idea: "Throw her in the river."

(LaMotta married six times. At the sixth wedding, Sugar Ray Robinson, who had fought him six times, served as best man. "We're divorced now," LaMotta would say in 1996, after the departure of his sixth bride. "I'm looking for lucky number seven.")

Others saw the storm of LaMotta, but Jake lived alone within its darkness. "From as early as I can remember, I didn't want to trust anybody," he says. "If you don't trust anybody, or make sure that basically you don't give a good goddamn about anybody, you're safe."

He withstood the Mob, but there was no way he was going to get a title shot without playing ball. He describes the moment, in 1947, when he finally makes his decision to take a dive in exchange for his shot. "Then suddenly I knew what I was going to do," he says. "There was only one thing I wanted out of life. That was to be the champ. I was going to be the champ no matter how." Then, a line as fine and telling as any: "All of a sudden I began to feel savage and better at the same time." It is writing such as this, a sentence so forthright yet so rich with shade and subtlety, that distinguishes *Raging Bull* from any other such book.

LaMotta fought 106 fights in a professional career that began in 1941 and ended in ignominy in 1954. He opened a joint in Miami, bottomed out as a drunk, got busted, wound up in stir. He seems in the end to have begun to understand. In 1970, the year of *Raging Bull's* publication, he said in an interview with Peter Heller, "I wanted to get punished and I took unnecessary punishment when I was fighting. I didn't realize it, but subconsciously I was trying to punish myself. Subconsciously—I didn't know it then, I realize it today when I know a little bit more about the mind and the brain—I fought like I didn't deserve to live."

Those words have the reverberation of truth, of illumination, but the somewhat forced sanguine and inspirational tone of *Raging Bull's* ending does not, and it seems rather an accommodation, a few pages of false light appended to palliate the darkness of all that has come before it. But this concession to convention no more ruins than redeems. Besides, the true ending, the postscript to the tale, can be found in its little known and more unsettling sequel, *Raging Bull II*, of 1986.

Were it not for Robert DeNiro and Martin Scorsese, *Raging Bull* and Jake LaMotta would be unknown today to all but hardcore aficionados of the fight game. It was DeNiro who brought the book to Scorsese in 1974. Pete Savage, before his name appeared as an author of *Raging Bull*, had produced and directed two low-budget films in which LaMotta played: Shot in Italy, the X-rated *House In Naples* (1969) featured Pete and Jake as army deserters turned dope-smugglers; the "bigger production" LaMotta refers to near the book's end as *Cauliflower Cupids* (1970) seems eventually to have had a nominal release as *The New Life Style*. Savage became a co-producer of the picture that would emerge, in 1980, as one of Scorsese's, and DeNiro's, masterworks. In the movie, the character of Pete would be merged into that of Jake's brother, Joey.

As for the character of Jake himself, Richard Meltzer has perceptively observed that it is in the two pay-phone scenes that DeNiro most sublimely captures and conveys the essence of that character: LaMotta's wordless call to his estranged brother after the 1950 Dauthuille fight; LaMotta outside a Miami pawnshop in 1957, saying it all and saying nothing, the lost and wounded beast of him no less unhidden by the calm of his fatalism than the gone-to-hell booze-gut his shirt no longer can conceal. It is an essence glimpsed, like the buried soul at the heart of this book.

The movie occasioned the reissue of the book in paperback, by Bantam. That was 17 years ago, and today, many, if not most, of those who know and admire *Raging Bull*, the picture, are unaware that it ever was a book. Well, it was a book, and it is good to have it back as such. ■

Nick Tosches, who is based in New York City, is an author and magazine writer. His books include Dino and Trinities, both of which are being made into films.

Reid

(Continued from page 43)

belong on HBO? Is he in the same status as Sugar Ray Leonard, Oscar De La Hoya, Muhammad Ali? All that was on my mind, but I didn't let it get to me. I wanted to have a good fight. America Presents [Reid's promoter] took a big-time gamble on me, and I didn't want to disappoint anybody. A lot of people probably looked way better than me in their pro debut, but didn't get to earn as much money."

The Koon fight, held at the Mammoth Event Center in Denver, was televised by the Fox Sports Network. And while it meant a smaller purse ($25,000 as compared to $200,000 for the Calderon fight), there are advantages to honing your skills away from the all-seeing eye of HBO's cameras.

"There's less pressure fighting on Fox. For instance, Philly doesn't get the Fox Sports Network unless you have a satellite dish," Reid explains. "But on HBO, everybody gets to see you. So you say to yourself, 'Damn, I've got to look good in front of millions of people.' But I liked Denver. It was a cool place to fight because the people were into the fight game. And that's what I like."

Viewing a tape of the Long fight, which was held in Syracuse, New York, and also broadcast by Fox, is even more pleasurable for Reid than reliving the Koon kayo. The lumpy-looking Long, 7-2-1 (4), bravely barrels forward from the start, straight into the teeth of Reid's powerpunches. A right catches the St. Louis clubfighter flush near the end of the first round, cutting his lip and sending him crashing to the canvas.

The bell interrupts Reid's assault, but only for 60 seconds. A compact left hook sends Long slumping to the floor again early in the second, and by the time a left-right combination cuts him down for good at the 1:33 mark, it's impossible not to feel sorry for the balding victim of Reid's lethal onslaught. The sight of Long landing head-first is so pitiful, you had to laugh to stop from crying.

"I go for guys 45 years old and up," jokes Reid, giggling in guilty pleasure at the way he manhandled Long, who is actually only 25.

Laughter comes easy to Reid, but there are facets of his newfound fame and fortune that he finds distinctly unfunny. Jealously, both from other fighters and from some of the people he grew up around, is particularly disturbing.

"Some fighters don't want me on their cards," says Reid. "That's because I'm the one that everybody will be looking at. But they shouldn't worry about that, because if they're the headliner, they should worry about what *they* can do, not what I can do. Just go out there and try to steal the attention away from me, because I'm gonna try to steal it from them."

Petty jealousies among fighters might be sophomoric, but at least they're understandable. However, the avaricious attitude some of the folks from Reid's old neighborhood have exhibited of late has him bewildered and seriously considering relocation.

"It seems like I'm just a big money tree sitting there, and as soon somebody needs some money, they just come and pick whatever they want off the tree," says Reid. "That's why I have to get out of the neighborhood. Sometimes, I'll stop at the corner for a quick 30 seconds, and then I'm out. I just want to let them know nothing has changed. I'm still the same guy, I haven't gone nowhere, and if you want to speak to me, you still can. It's just that when it comes to, 'Dave, I need a little bit of money,' that's where I have a problem. Because if you haven't been hanging around me before, don't try to hang around me now since I've done made it. I always keep it real with the people who I've been hanging with before. That's why you never see me with a large entourage. All they're gonna do is suck you up. And you have only one chance of a lifetime to make it this big. I'm gonna be smart with my money, invest it the best way I can."

There has also been a meaningful development in Reid's personal life, one that has left him with decidedly mixed feelings.

"I should be a father next month some time," Reid says. "It makes me feel good to have a son coming into the world, but I'm going to take a blood test, which is only right. I know the baby is mine, but I just want to make sure. Before, when we [Reid and the mother-to-be] were together, and we were together for something like 3½ years, she never got pregnant! I guess she wanted to keep me there. I'm not talking bad about her, but that's the way I see it. We break up, and all of a sudden she's pregnant. But I am happy to have a child in this world. I didn't really want to have any this soon, but what are you gonna do? At least I'm in a position to be able to support my baby."

As his responsibilities grow, so does Reid's determination to make a success of his boxing career. He knows he's still got a lot of grueling work ahead of him before he fulfills his potential, but he's already set a tentative goal of fighting for a world title by the end of 1998, most likely at middleweight.

"Al [Mitchell] thinks I'm gonna be at 154 [pounds] for another year-and-a-half, which I know I'm not. I don't have no fat nowhere," says Reid, sticking his hand into the top of his jeans to show how much extra room there is. "You can see that I'm skinny. Right now, I'm in the first stage of having trouble with my weight. By next year, I'll be fighting 160. I weighed 155½ for my last fight, but I don't feel as strong as I'll feel at 160. I'm quicker and more accurate at 160."

A title fight at 160 pounds brings up a tantalizing possibility. Like Reid, IBF middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins is promoted by America Presents. Reid is a friend and admirer of his fellow Philadelphian, but that wouldn't prevent him from crossing gloves with "The Executioner."

"He's a great guy, but I would love to fight Bernard," says Reid. "He can fight and is at the top of his game right now, but in my personal opinion, I would outbox him. Looking at his fights with Roy Jones and John David Jackson, I saw a whole lot of flaws. He's accurate with his punches, but he cannot adapt. He's only got one style."

But Reid is getting ahead of himself, and he knows it.

"I have to take my time, take it slow—but not too slow—and fight guys who are willing to fight back," he says. "Al will know when I can step up in competition."

Sounds like a sensible plan. After all, we still don't know for sure if Reid can whup the doorman. ■

Austin

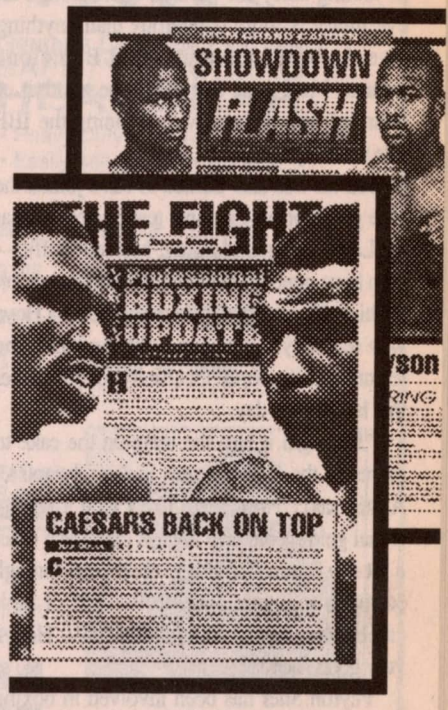
(Continued from page 46)

champion, I just said to myself, *It's about time.*"

Although in the weeks after the fight Austin was subsisting on meals of eggs, oatmeal, and grits, all of which he had to drink through a straw, the 26-year-old champion said winning the world title was the thrill of his lifetime. It completely erased the ignominy and disappointment of returning home to Race Street in downtown Cincinnati without the gold medal that so many people

(Continued on page 78)

Worldwide guide to pro boxing



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Austin

(Continued from page 77)

had projected he was a shoo-in to win.

"Of course the Olympic loss hurt," he said. "But I was back in the gym in three weeks. I made up my mind to not take that loss as the end of the world. I never considered quitting or feeling sorry for myself, even though an eye injury is more dangerous than anything else. I always thought about Barcelona because I had gone there with the mindset of winning, and did not win. Winning the IBF title made up for that."

Austin was also thrilled to have joined the elite group of his Olympic teammates—Oscar De La Hoya, Raul Marquez, Montell Griffin—who have gone on to win professional championships. He says that even though De La Hoya was the only American gold medalist, the teammates developed an affinity for each other that lasts to this day.

"I thought it was the icing on the cake to represent the United States in the Olympics," Austin said. "Now I feel like I won a professional gold medal. We always gave each other a lot of support because we had been through so much together. I still follow all of their careers, but talk to Montell the most. He's a very good friend."

Peyton Sher has been involved in boxing as a matchmaker and promoter for well over 50 years. He has been a longtime adviser to Austin, and as matchmaker for Don King Productions, has made all of Austin's professional bouts. He also steered him to his current manager, Carl King. Sher was impressed with Austin since long before the Olympics, and his opinion was not swayed by the disqualification loss.

"Timmy not only has a lot of guts, he has a lot of heart and ability, too," said Sher. "This kid was off for 17 months, but was eager to accept this fight. He told me that he dreamed of winning a world title for so long that nothing was going to hold him back. Not 17 months of inactivity, not anything."

The inactivity came about because of a deep cut Austin received on his eye while sparring, a separation from his original trainer and adviser, John Falcone, a domestic dispute, and a slew of personal problems the fighter did not care to discuss. To make matters worse, he suffered a bout with the flu in the weeks preceding the Botile fight. Still, he never considered pulling out a viable option.

"Timmy is really an implacable guy," said Mike Marley, public relations director for DKP. "He really made his bones in that fight. There is an old Ray Arcel motto that says, 'to rest is to rust,' and that certainly could have applied here. People didn't know if Timmy could take a punch or if he had championship heart. The answer to both of those questions is yes, with a big exclamation point. We all knew he wasn't chopped liver coming out of the Olympics with a bronze medal, but now people will see just how good he is."

Actually, Austin really made his bones by not giving in to temptation on the mean streets of downtown Cincinnati, where he grew up and still visits on a regular basis. Although he says he grew up much too fast, he credits a happy home life and an old boxing sage named Mugmuzughn Kemp with enabling him to resist the lurid temptations of the street. Many of his friends chose an alternate route and are now addicted to or selling drugs, incarcerated, or dead. Austin realized early on that boxing was much more than a sport for him; it was a means to an end.

As a six-year-old, he watched local amateur sensations Aaron Pryor, Tony Tubbs, and Tommy Ayers train daily at the Emanuel Community Center under the tutelage of Kemp, and got excited when he saw them preparing for a road trip and loading their equipment into a van. To Austin, those road trips represented the intoxicating mixture of adventure and camaraderie that he longed for, and he soon asked Kemp if he could join the program.

"I really started to enjoy boxing then, and it gave me a great sense of purpose," Austin said. "I also had a very happy home life, so I was pretty lucky. My mother didn't want me to be a boxer, so she gave a lot of responsibilities to keep me busy. By eight years old, I was going to the Laundromat, playing the numbers, getting cigarettes, and cashing in pop bottles for the family. I grew up fast, but my mother taught me how to be decent, hard-working, and how to overcome hardship. There was a lot of drug infestation, violence, and crime in my neighborhood, but I was able to use all that negativity to inspire me. I still use that to inspire me."

Sadly, his mother, Ann Austin, died in 1986 at age 41 after a second stroke and a battle with diabetes. His father, Moses, succumbed to cancer in 1988. Those deaths have left an indelible impression on Austin and have armed him with the resolve to try to bring all his dreams to fruition. It also brought him and his five siblings much closer together, another bond of which he is most proud.

"My family gives me a great deal of strength," he explained. "Having them there when I won the title was very important to me."

In addition, there were about 150 maniacal fans who had driven to Nashville from Cincinnati to see Austin win the title. He certainly had the biggest cheering section in the arena that night, although his fight was the co-feature to WBA super middleweight champion Frankie Liles' defense against Zafarou Ballogou.

Marley says that the Austin victory provided a breath of fresh air for DKP, especially in light of the recent debacles involving King-promoted heavyweights Mike Tyson, Oliver McCall, and Henry Akinwande.

"It was a great fight for us," Marley proclaimed. "In the wake of what's happened recently, it made us feel good. Down the line there is the potential for an awesome rematch, which would be a big-money fight in South Africa."

Because Austin had a whirlwind, international amateur career, he would have no compunction about going abroad to take on local challengers or foreign-based champions. Two 118-pound champions, Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (WBC) and Daorung C. Siriwat (WBA), hail from Thailand, as does top contender Veeraphol Sahaprom. With the exception of Paulie Ayala of Fort Worth, Texas, there are few, if any, notable American challengers, and certainly none that could garner Austin a significant payday.

"One of my many goals is to perform out of the country," said Austin. "I did it as an amateur, and I'll do it as a world champion, too. As long as the money is good, I'll go anywhere."

Being somewhat of a boxing historian, Austin describes the amazing career of one of his idols, Kid Chocolate, the former featherweight and junior lightweight champion who barnstormed around the world in the 1920s and '30s, taking on all comers and having a good time in the process. Another hero of his is Ezzard Charles, a Cincinnati-based fighter who was heavyweight champion for just under a year in the early-1950s. Early in Austin's career, he had even considered fighting under the name Ezzard Charles II. He initially became enamored of Charles when he realized

(Continued on page 80)

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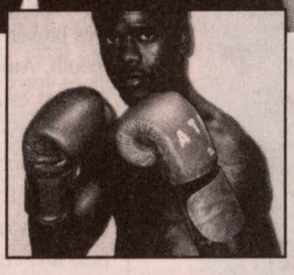

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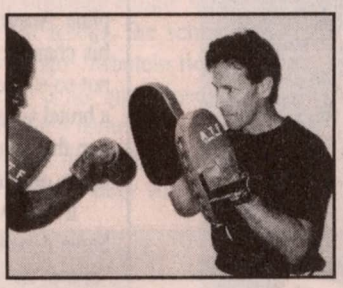

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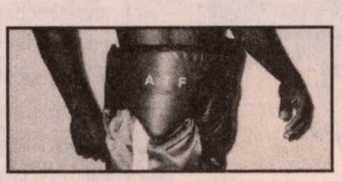

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Austin

(Continued from page 78)

there were streets and apartment buildings named after him in Cincinnati, and he was taken with the respect and dignity accorded his memory. Austin became such a student of Charles that he was shocked to learn he was not even a Cincinnati native, and was actually born in Georgia. These fighters served as Austin's muses as he garnered international acclaim as an amateur, and now has done the same as a pro.

Ultimately, Austin sees himself moving up to 126 pounds, and tangling along the way with the likes of Junior Jones, Marco Antonio Barrera, Kennedy McKinney, and Naseem Hamed.

Austin has already proven to have great survival skills. Two judges in the Botile fight had him behind, by scores of 67-65 and 67-66, while the third had it 68-68. Although his jaw was broken and blood was gurgling out of his mouth, Austin came on to score a knockout over an established and favored champion. Soon afterward, he revisited the crime-infested neighborhood from whence he came to show his older friends that there might still be a shred of hope for them if they chose a different path and committed themselves to self-discipline. Austin also let the area youngsters touch his championship belt, and offered them the not-so-subtle message that if he made it in such a brutal vocation, they could make it any vocation they chose if only they practiced the rudiments of self-discipline.

It is no wonder that Showtime announcers Steve Albert and Ferdie Pacheco called Austin "one of the best-kept secrets in boxing." It is apparent, though, that his depth goes well beyond his accomplishments in the ring.

"Although I certainly want to make money, I'm not just fighting for the money," said Austin. "I'm fighting for pride and for my country. I want little kids to know it is okay to dream. Dreaming is part of life; it brings focus and direction. You can't have one without the other. When you are focused you can get yourself through anything. Boxing is everything to me now, but nothing compared to having a loving family. Having my parents would be more precious than having any title. But with them as my inspiration, I feel unbeatable. I know I'm really gonna like being champion."■

Robert Mladinich, a frequent contributor to The Ring, is based in New York City.

FISKE ON FIGHTS

By Jack Fiske

This essay is not written in jest, although some of the thoughts expressed may make the reader guffaw in disbelief.

Boxing in America as we knew it 30 to 40 years ago no longer exists. There is no argument here or elsewhere. With all its warts and shortcomings, the sport will not be recognizable in this country in 10 years.

If you're a dedicated fight fan or merely a devotee via newspaper or television, get ready for a complete blackout of boxing news shortly after the turn of the century. While the rest of the world's interest in professional boxing continues to increase by leaps and bounds, the negatives continue to pile up here.

Some of the reasons for the gradual decline of the sport: poor amateur programs; mismatches; greed; inept and corrupt judges; too much television exposure; too little television exposure of desirable matches; not-so-laughable ratings by unscrupulous sanctioning bodies; astronomical ticket prices.

Now approaches a new disease: unknown, indistinguishable champions, challengers, and contenders from far-away lands. Check the latest ratings of any of the alphabet groups and they're full of fighters you 1) never heard of; 2) can't pronounce; or 3) can't spell.

It doesn't sound serious, does it? But take a moment and reconsider. The vast majority of these unpronounceables are foreign performers with no track record in this country.

"So what?" you ask. This is what: Successful boxing shows depend on audiences—live or in front of the television—that can generate a profit for the promoter and enough gate receipts to guarantee the combatants enough money to make it worthwhile. If the fighters are well-known to the masses, the turnstiles will click. If they are complete non-entities, if the fans never heard of them, the public will stay home and watch a sitcom instead.

It's deplorable that only a few—very few—newspapers in this country print right results or news of fighters that draws and builds the interest of the fans. Recently, there has been an influx of foreign fighters who are complete strangers to American fans. (Remember, about 70 percent of boxing's revenue is generated in the USA.) The result: a falloff in interest and an almost complete blackout of news by the media. Who cares about an unpronounceable emigre from South Africa or Thailand?

In recent weeks, the schedule of title bouts in America included such foreign participants as Zafarou Ballogou (Togo), Mbulelo Botile (South Africa), Jake Matlala (South Africa), and Laurent Boudouani (France). Their ability is not questioned here. Instead, it is their identity. How many fight followers had heard of them or recognized their names?

A check of the alphabet ratings reveals that even at the higher weights, foreign fighters dominate. Consider: Heavyweights—Henry Akinwande and Zeljko Mavrovic; Cruiserweights—Fabrice Tiozzo, Jacob Mofokeng, Yosukezan Nishijima, Chris Okoh, Alexei Ilin, Ezequiel Paixao, Dirk Walleyn, Valery Vichor, Ralf Rocchigiani, Marcelo Dominguez, and Alexander Gurov; Light Heavyweights—Eddy Smulders, Graciano Rocchigiani, Joe Mohammed Siluvangi, and Dario Matteoni; Super Middleweights—Thulani Malinga, Vincenzo Nardiello, Andrei Schkalikov, Joe Calzaghe, Zafarou Ballogou, Joseph Kiwanuka, Leif Keiski, and Roberto Coelho; Middleweights—Hassine Cherifi, Stephane Ouellette, and Rogerio Cacciatore (the most recognizable name of all).

If you can't pronounce the name of junior middle champion Laurent Boudouani (shown against Carl Daniels), does that mean you don't want to see him fight?

How many, if any, would you pay to see fight?

In 10 years or less, the following conversation between fight fans will begin to take place more frequently than you can imagine:

"Hey, Joe, let's go to the fights."

"Who's fighting?"

"I don't know. A couple of guys from overseas whose names I don't remember."

"I'll pass."

You read it here first. ■

WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by THE RING are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were compiled as of July 1997, the WBC as of June 1997, and the IBF as of August 1997.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	–	–
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	–
Michael Moorer (USA)	–	–	C
Henry Akinwande (GB)	1	–	–
Zeljko Mavrovic (CROA)	2	2	6
Orlin Norris (USA)	3	5	9
David Tua (NZ)	4	12	–
Andrew Golota (POL)	5	4	10
Ray Mercer (USA)	6	–	5
Francois Botha (SA)	7	1	2
John Ruiz (USA)	8	6	–
Ike Ibeabuchi (NIG)	9	8	–
Corrie Sanders (SA)	10	3	3
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	14	7	–
Jerry Ballard (USA)	26	9	–
Adilson Rodriguez (BRA)	–	10	–
Vaughn Bean (USA)	–	–	1
Obed Sullivan (USA)	16	–	4
Hasim Rahman (USA)	–	–	7
Chris Byrd (USA)	15	–	8

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	C	–	–
Nate Miller (USA)	–	C	–
Uriah Grant (USA)	–	–	C
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	1	7	–
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	2	2	–
Akim Tafer (FRA)	3	5	–
Torsten May (GER)	4	6	7
Johnny Nelson (GB)	5	–	–
Terry Dunstan (GB)	6	3	11
Jacob Mofokeng (SA)	7	–	3
Yosukezan Nishijima (JAP)	8	–	–
Hisashi Teraji (JAP)	9	–	–
Alexei Ilin (RUS)	10	10	–
Ezequiel Paixao (BRA)	–	1	–
Adopho Washington (USA)	–	4	–
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	–	8	–
Ken Murphy (USA)	–	9	5
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Arthur Williams (USA)	24	12	4
Adolpho Washington (USA)	–	–	6
Faustino Gonzalez (COL)	–	–	8
Imamu Mayfield (USA)	22	11	9
Tiwon Taylor (USA)	–	–	10

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Montell Griffin (USA)	C	–	–
Vacant	–	C	–
William Guthrie (USA)	–	–	C
Roy Jones (USA)	1	2	–
Michael Nunn (USA)	2	5	–
Eddy Smulders (HOLL)	3	3	8
Graciano Rocchigiani (GER)	4	–	6
Crawford Ashley (GB)	5	7	5
Merqui Sosa (DR)	6	9	–
Muhammad Siluvangi (ZAI)	7	8	12
Chris Eubank (GB)	8	11	–
Richard Frazier (USA)	9	10	11
Mark Prince (GB)	10	–	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	1	3
Virgil Hill (USA)	–	4	4
Dario Matteoni (ARG)	16	6	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Darrin Allen (USA)	–	–	7
Ray Berry (USA)	21	–	9
Richard Hall (USA)	–	–	10

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Robin Reid (GB)	C	–	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	C	–
Charles Brewer (USA)	–	–	C
Thulane Malinga (SA)	1	–	–
Vincenzo Nardiello (ITA)	2	–	9
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	3	1	5
Joe Calzaghe (GB)	4	9	4
Henry Wharton (GB)	5	–	–
Roberto Duran (PAN)	6	–	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	7	–	–
Chris Johnson (CAN)	8	–	–
Joseph Kiwanuka (UGA)	9	3	7
Eric Lucas (CAN)	10	–	–
Mauricio Amaral (BRA)	14	2	3
Leif Keiski (SWE)	26	4	–
Herol Graham (GB)	–	5	–
Francis Dean (GB)	–	6	–
Giovanni Pretorius (SA)	12	7	–
Bruno Girard (FRA)	23	8	–
Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)	–	10	6
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Willie Monroe (USA)	–	–	8
Robert Coehlo (BRA)	–	–	10

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	1	7	5
Stephane Ouelette (CAN)	2	–	–
Robert McCracken (GB)	3	–	4
Paul Vaden (USA)	4	2	3
Julian Jackson (USA)	5	6	–
Richie Woodhall (GB)	6	–	–
Julio Cesar Vazquez (ARG)	7	–	–
Kevin Palmer (USA)	8	–	–
Glen Johnson (USA)	9	8	–
Brian Barbosa (USA)	10	4	6
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	20	1	–
Peter Venancio (BRA)	–	3	–
Robert Allen (USA)	12	5	7
Dana Rosenblatt (USA)	15	9	–
Anthony Andrews (GUY)	21	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Abdula Ramadan (CAN)	–	–	8
Rogerio Cacciatore (BRA)	24	–	9
Alex Zaitzev (RUS)	–	–	10

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Terry Norris (USA)	C	–	–
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	–	C	–
Raul Marquez (USA)	–	–	C
Troy Waters (AUSTRL)	1	11	–
Davide Ciarlante (ITA)	2	2	–
Said Bennajem (FRA)	3	–	–
Javier Castillejo (SPA)	4	6	–
Ernie Artango (AUSTRL)	5	–	–
Ahmed Dottuev (BALK)	6	10	–
Faouzi Hattab (FRA)	7	–	–
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	8	1	3
Chang Taek Kim (KOR)	9	–	–
Tarick Salmaci (SYR)	10	–	–
Tony Menefee (USA)	–	3	–
Carl Daniels (USA)	–	4	11
Robert McCracken (GB)	–	5	–
Stephen Martinez (USA)	–	7	–
Jason Papillion (USA)	21	8	4
Kevin Kelly (USA)	–	9	–
Anthony Stephens (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Aaron Davis (USA)	–	–	5
Andrew Murray (GUY)	–	–	6
Earnie Artango (AUSTRL)	–	–	7
Adrian Dodson (GB)	18	–	8
Ryan Rhodes (GB)	20	–	9
Rossman Henry (COL)	–	–	10

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	C	–	–
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	C	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	–	C
Patrick Charpentier (FRA)	1	3	1
Pernell Whitaker (USA)	2	2	3
Derrell Coley (USA)	3	4	8
Wilfredo Rivera (PR)	4	9	–
Andrei Pestryaev (RUS)	5	1	–
Ariel Chaves (ARG)	6	–	–
Robert West (USA)	7	–	–
Suk Hyun Yun (KOR)	8	–	–
Diobelys Hurtado (CUBA)	9	–	–
Edwin Rosario (PR)	10	–	–
Jeff Malcolm (AUSTRL)	–	5	–
Oba Carr (USA)	–	6	–
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	11	7	–
Andrew Murray (GUY)	23	8	–
Juan Negron (PR)	29	10	–
Vincent Pettway (USA)	–	–	2
Mahenge Zulu (ZAI)	–	–	4
Hugo Pineda (COL)	–	–	5
Hitonon Sato (JAP)	–	–	6
Purcell Miller (USA)	–	–	7
Juan Negron (PR)	–	–	9
Walter Saporiti (ARG)	–	–	10

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Vacant	C	–	–
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	–	C	–
Vince Phillips (USA)	–	–	C
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	1	1	–
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	2	2	–
Ismael Chaves (ARG)	3	–	–
Rafael Ruelas (MEX)	4	–	–
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	5	5	5
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	6	3	2
Jong Hoon Yuh (KOR)	7	–	–
Ricardo Silva (ARG)	8	–	–
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	9	–	9
Reggie Green (USA)	10	–	–
Frankie Randall (USA)	–	4	3
Soren Sondergaard (DEN)	11	6	–
Viacheslav Yanovsky (KAZ)	–	7	–
Ray Oliveira (USA)	13	8	–
Virgil McClendon (USA)	–	9	6
Jose Barbosa (VEN)	–	10	–
Freddie Pendleton (USA)	–	–	1
Jermal Corbin (USA)	–	–	4
Vernon Forrest (USA)	–	–	7
Jan Bergman (SA)	–	–	8
Freddy Rojas (CHILE)	–	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Steve Johnston (USA)	C	–	–
Orzubek Nazarov (JAP)	–	C	–
Shane Mosley (USA)	–	–	C
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	1	–	–
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	2	3	–
Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)	3	–	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	4	1	–
Jong Kwon Baek (KOR)	5	–	–
Daomai Sithkodam (THAI)	6	–	–
Jimmy Rangel (COL)	7	–	–
Marco Rudolph (GER)	8	–	–
Oscar Garcia Cano (SPA)	9	5	–
David Dodi Tetteh (GHA)	10	4	11
Eduardo Morales (ARG)	16	2	2
Angel Mona (FRA)	–	6	–
Leavander Johnson (USA)	–	7	8
Samir Cherrad (FRA)	20	8	–
Ceppy Holman (INDO)	–	9	–
Fred Ladd (USA)	–	10	9
Demetrius Ceballos (USA)	24	–	1
Justin Rowsell (AUSTRL)	–	–	3
Phillip Holiday (SA)	–	–	4
Israel Cardona (USA)	–	11	5
Luis Flores (COL)	–	–	6
Pete Taliaferro (USA)	–	–	7
Wilson Palacio (COL)	21	–	10

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Genaro Hernandez (USA)	C	–	–
Yong Soo Choi (KOR)	–	C	–
Arturo Gatti (USA)	–	–	C
Gabriel Ruelas (USA)	1	–	–
Robert Garcia (USA)	2	5	1
Anatoly Alexandrov (RUS)	3	6	–
Azumah Nelson (GHA)	4	–	–
Djamel Lifa (FRA)	5	7	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	6	11	10
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	7	–	–
Jesus Chavez (USA)	8	–	–
Derrick Gainer (USA)	9	–	–
Justin Juuko (UGA)	10	–	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	28	1	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	–	2	–
Carlos Gerena (PR)	–	3	–
Tom Johnson (USA)	–	4	4
Edson Xuxa Nacimento (BRA)	–	8	–
Miguel Casillas (MEX)	–	9	–
Santos Rebolledo (VEN)	–	10	–
Harold Warren (USA)	16	–	2
Jaime Rangel (COL)	–	–	3
Tracy Patterson (USA)	–	–	5
Ramon Ledon (CUBA)	–	–	6
Barry Jones (GB)	–	–	7
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	–	–	8
Miguel Arrozal (PHIL)	–	–	9

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	C	–	–
Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)	–	C	–
Naseem Hamed (GB)	11	–	C
Carlos Rios (ARG)	1	1	–
Cesar Soto (MEX)	2	–	–
Ever Beleno (COL)	3	8	3
Manuel Medina (MEX)	4	–	–
Jose Noyola (MEX)	5	–	–
Paul Ingle (GB)	6	–	–
Mehdi Labdouni (FRA)	7	–	–
Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)	8	–	–
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	9	–	–
November Ntshingila (AUSTRL)	10	7	4
Yober Ortega (VEN)	–	2	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	3	5
Frederic Perez (FRA)	–	4	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	5	–
Hector Arroyo (PR)	–	6	–
Angel Vasquez (PR)	22	9	7
Roque Cassiani (COL)	–	10	–
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	–	–	1
Welcome Ncita (SA)	–	–	2
Carlos Gerena (PR)	–	–	6
Jesus Chavez (USA)	–	–	8
Jose Badillo (PR)	–	–	9
Edward Barrios (COL)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Daniel Zaragoza (MEX)	C	–	–
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	–	C	–
Vuyani Bungu (SA)	–	–	C
Erik Morales (MEX)	1	2	9
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	2	–	–
Pastor Maurin (ARG)	3	9	–
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	4	3	8
Reynante Jamili (PHIL)	5	–	6
Bong Chul Kim (KOR)	6	7	–
Jose Luis Bueno (MEX)	7	–	–
Welcome Ncita (SA)	8	–	–
Kennedy McKinney (USA)	9	5	2
Spencer Oliver (GB)	10	4	5
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	15	1	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	6	–
Serge Poilblan (FRA)	12	8	–
Angel Rosario (PR)	25	10	–
Anell Barotillo (AUSTRL)	–	–	1
Victor Llerena (COL)	–	–	3
Nurhuda (INDO)	–	–	4
Valdir Matias (BRA)	–	–	7
Sean Fletcher (USA)	–	–	10

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Siromongkol Singmanasuk (THAI)	C	–	–
Nana Konadu (GHA)	–	C	–
Tim Austin (USA)	–	–	C
Victor Rabanales (MEX)	1	–	–
Paul Ayala (USA)	2	3	–
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	3	12	–
Jorge Monsalvo (COL)	4	–	–
In Jin Chi (KOR)	5	–	–
Adan Vargas (MEX)	6	–	8
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	7	9	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	8	–	6
Setsuo Kawamasu (JAP)	9	–	–
John Michael Johnson (USA)	10	–	5
Abraham Torres (VEN)	–	1	–
Lukhin CP Gym (THAI)	–	2	–
Daorung C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	4	–
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	5	–
Yong Hoon Lee (KOR)	–	6	–
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	11	7	–
Johnny Armour (GB)	16	8	–
Angel Chacon (PR)	–	10	–
Adrian Kaspari (INDO)	–	–	1
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	–	2
Jesus Perez (COL)	17	–	3
Wilson Alcorro (COL)	–	–	4
Shaszi Nitta (JAP)	–	–	7
Fernando Montilla (PHIL)	–	–	9
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	C	–	–
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	–	C	–
Johnny Tapia (USA)	–	–	C
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	1	6	–
Luis Bolanos (COL)	2	–	–
Jose Rafael Sosa (ARG)	3	–	–
Luis Benavides (COL)	4	–	9
Veeraphol Sahaprom (THAI)	5	3	–
Hiroshi Kawashima (JAP)	6	–	–
Raffy Montalban (PHIL)	7	–	–
Evangelio Perez (PAN)	8	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	9	12	–
Hipolito Saucedo (USA)	10	–	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	1	–
Satoshi Iida (JAP)	–	2	8
Andy Agosto (PR)	13	4	4
Leo Gamez (VEN)	–	5	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	–	7	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	–	8	–
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	–	9	–
Edicson Torres (VEN)	–	10	–
Danny Romero (USA)	–	–	1
Ubadel Soto (COL)	–	–	2
Ratanachai Sor Voraphin (THAI)	15	–	3
Sombak Singchawan (THAI)	–	–	5
Juvenal Berrio (COL)	–	–	6
Jaji Sibali (SA)	23	–	7
Joel Luna (MEX)	–	–	10

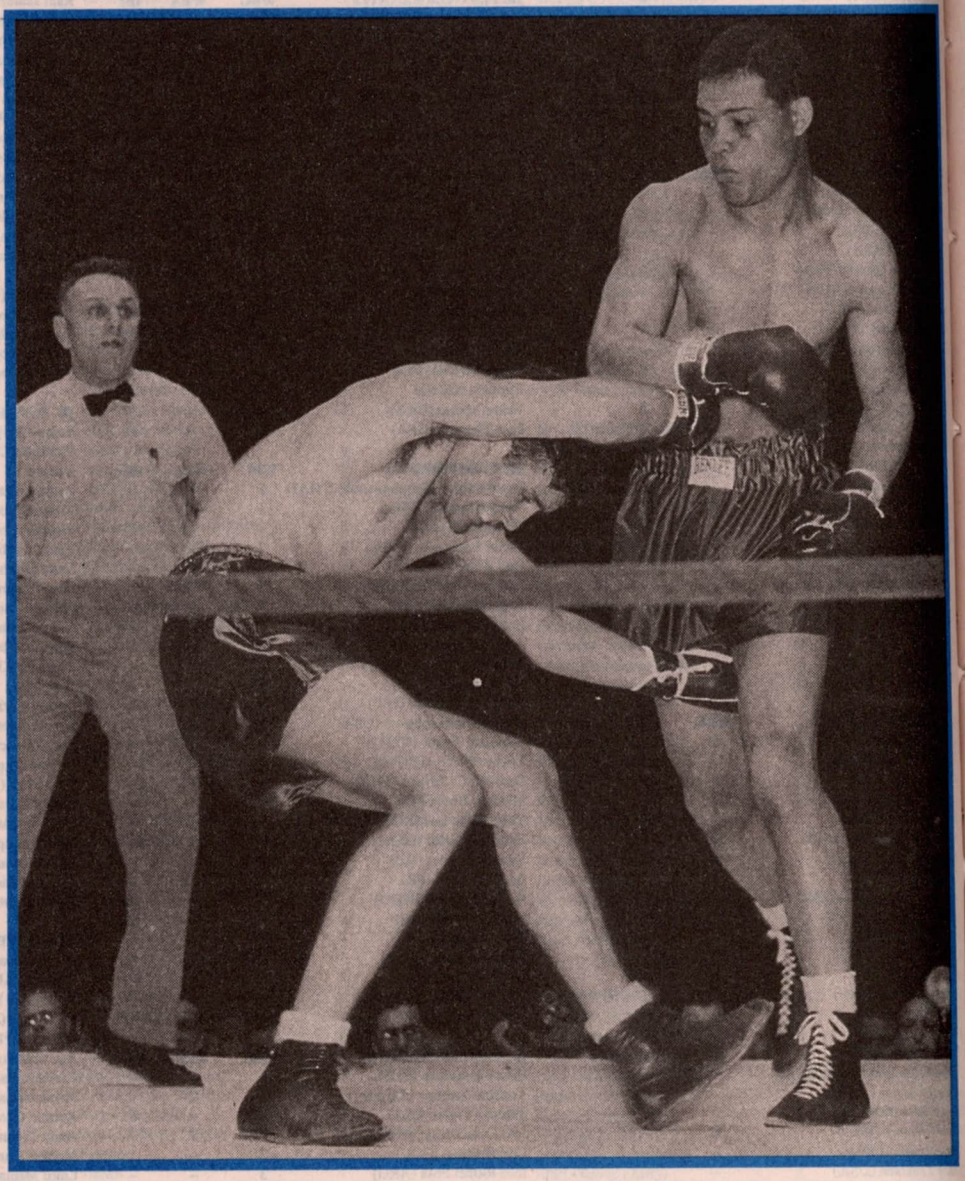
FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Yuri Arbachakov (RUS)	C	–	–
Chatchai Dutchboygym (THAI)	IC	–	–
Jose Bonilla (VEN)	–	C	–
Mark Johnson (USA)	–	–	C
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	1	–	–
Yong Soon Chang (KOR)	2	12	–
Chokchai Chokviwat (THAI)	3	–	–
Isaias Zamudio (USA)	4	–	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	5	–	–
Raul Juarez (MEX)	6	11	–
David Guerault (FRA)	7	–	–
Arthur Johnson (USA)	8	4	9
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	9	–	8
Oscar Arciniega (MEX)	10	–	–
Evangelino Perez (PAN)	–	1	2
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	2	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	3	–
Takashi Ohba (JAP)	28	5	–
Aquiles Guzman (VEN)	–	6	–
Miguel Martinez (MEX)	–	7	–
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	8	3
Hiroki Ioka (JAP)	–	9	–
Manny Pacquiao (PHIL)	21	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Ilido Julio (COL)	25	–	4
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	5
Yodchingchai Sornthong (THAI)	–	–	6
Will Grigsby (USA)	30	–	7
Vuyani Nene (SA)	–	–	10

JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	C	–	–
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	C	–
Vacant	–	–	C
Ladislao Vazquez (MEX)	1	–	12
Yosam Choi (KOR)	2	9	–
Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)	3	11	8
Kaaj Chartbandi (THAI)	4	–	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	5	8	10
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	6	6	11
Phanieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	7	5	–
Gabriel Munoz (MEX)	8	–	–
Edgar Cardenas (MEX)	9	–	–
Yong Jin Kim (KOR)	10	4	–
Hadao C.P. Gym (THAI)	–	1	–
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	–	2	3
Suzuki Kabato (JAP)	–	3	–
Sinn Ploenchit (THAI)	–	7	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	–	10	–
Anis Roga (INDO)	–	–	1
Mauricio Pastrana (COL)	–	–	2
Onewin Chareon (THAI)	–	–	4
Nelson Dieppa (PR)	–	–	5
Manuel Jesus Herrera (DR)	–	–	6
Takashi Shiohama (JAP)	–	–	7
Juan Cordoba (ARG)	–	–	9

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	C	–	–
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	–	C	–
Ratanapol Sow Voraphin (THAI)	–	–	C
Rocky Lin (JAP)	1	1	–
Sinn Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	2	–	–
Ala Villamor (PHIL)	3	–	5
Carmelo Caceres (PHIL)	4	–	9
Payak Nakornluang (THAI)	5	–	–
Kermin Guardia (COL)	6	9	–
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	7	12	2
Mongol Charoen (THAI)	8	–	12
Lindi Memani (SA)	9	11	–
Sang Chul Lee (KOR)	10	–	–
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	2	–
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	3	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	4	–
Ronnie Magramo (PHIL)	–	5	–
Satoru Abe (JAP)	24	6	–
Wondee Charoen (THAI)	–	7	4
Randy Mangubat (PHIL)	30	8	–
Lee Sandoval (NIC)	15	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Osvaldo Guerrero (MEX)	–	–	3
Juan Herrera (COL)	–	–	6
Wellington Vicente (BRA)	–	–	7
Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)	22	–	8
Carlos Eluaiza (ARG)	–	–	10

CLASSIC

THE FIRST LOUIS-CONN FIGHT RECONSTRUCTED



Battle in which Joe stopped Billy in 13th on champion's mind—he has not failed in second meeting

From THE RING, June 1946

By Daniel M. Daniel

On June 19, under the lights in Yankee Stadium in New York, Joe Louis, heavyweight champion of the world, will defend the title for a second time against Billy Conn of Pittsburgh.

It will be recollected that when they met for the first time, on June 18, 1941, at the Polo Grounds in New York, Louis scored a knockout in the 13th round.

Just as Jim Jeffries was on the verge of losing his championship to Jim Corbett at Coney Island when the crouching Boilermaker, who had dropped 22 consecutive sessions to the former heavyweight king, uncorked one in the 23rd, so did Louis save his laurels in the 13th against Conn.

Not that Conn had emulated Corbett up to the point of cessation of hostilities. Billy had taken quite a few racking punches. He had been shaken from head to foot by some of Joe's best. But Conn had piled up a sufficiency of points to have wrested the championship from "The Brown Bomber" had the contest lasted the limit of 15 heats.

All Conn had to do was keep his head, fight super-cautiously, attempt to do nothing radical, just skate along on what he already owned.

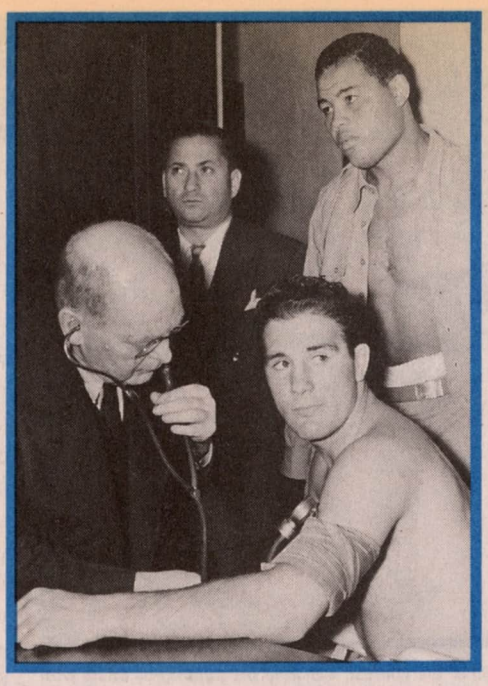
But the wild Irishman from Pittsburgh could not resist the temptation to become a fistic wise-aleck and was knocked out for his pains.

Of course, it is conceivable that if Louis had not landed the stopper in the 13th, he would have done so in the 14th. Nor is there any guarantee that if Conn had lasted into the 15th, a determined, hard-punching champion would not have belted in the haymaker in the final session.

However, we have to go by what we know, by what we saw that night at the Polo Grounds, and assume that quick-moving Conn could have coasted with his lead on points and forced the judges to give him the title, if he had not become too cocky with Louis.

Now all that is water over the dam and under the bridges. Five years have passed since that Louis-Conn imbroglio, and now we face a return fight, another contest in that stupendous sequence of spectacular events reminiscent of the Rickard heyday—a $2-million battle.

We are not here and now concerned with the possibility that the Stadium will be packed to suffocation and that the take will be the biggest in the history of New York boxing, second only to that for the return Dempsey-Tunney fight in Chicago.



Conn and Louis undergo their prefight physicals before squaring off at the Polo Grounds in New York City. The bout was Louis' 18th defense of the heavyweight title.

Rather are we concerned over the technical points which confront us in the June 19 affair.

It is for us to go back over that first Louis-Conn fight, blow-by-blow, and to consider all the fistic factors which enter into the situation as of today.

It is the writer's impression that Louis will win again, and win considerably earlier than the 13th round.

Backing up this impression is Louis' history as regards second meetings.

Joe is not a mental giant. In fact, the first time he encounters an opponent, he has a tendency to think and act down one track.

He schemes his methods of attack and defense, and must stick to them quite closely. If something most unusual crops up, he is at a loss.

However, while fighting a rival for the first time, Louis films a picture of his man's every move. Joe has an uncanny memory. He photographs in his subconscious every punch delivered by his opponent. He remembers every contingency, every expedient, every reaction. He works out from this collection of indelible impressions a pretty accurate idea of what his rival will do in certain situations, how he will react to every type of punch.

When Louis encounters an opponent for the second time, he unreels the first picture. He knows what his antagonist will do, and he knows what he, himself, will do against certain punches and when certain definitely looked-for developments happen.

Please do not overlook one essential fact. The leopard never changes his spots; a fighter is not likely to devise a new system of combat for his most important test. Didn't Bob Fitzsimmons work up the solar plexus punch to beat Corbett? Certainly! But Fitz had used that wallop before. It had not received the publicity which Bob Davis was to give it after Gentleman Jim had been knocked out with it, standing up against the ropes at Carson City, Nevada.

Louis will know precisely what Conn will do from one bell to another. His photographic mind will see to that.

Let us take a look at Joe's performances in second meetings. In his first engagement with Max Schmeling, The Brown Bomber was mowed down in the 12th. "I know just why that happened," Louis explained. "Another time he won't do that to me. I have a picture in my mind of just how he does it."

When they met again, Louis almost killed Max, and stopped him in the first round.

In Joe's first meeting with Arturo Godoy, in the Garden in New York, the Chilean tincanned for 15 rounds. Godoy's crouch and his continual movement baffled the champion.

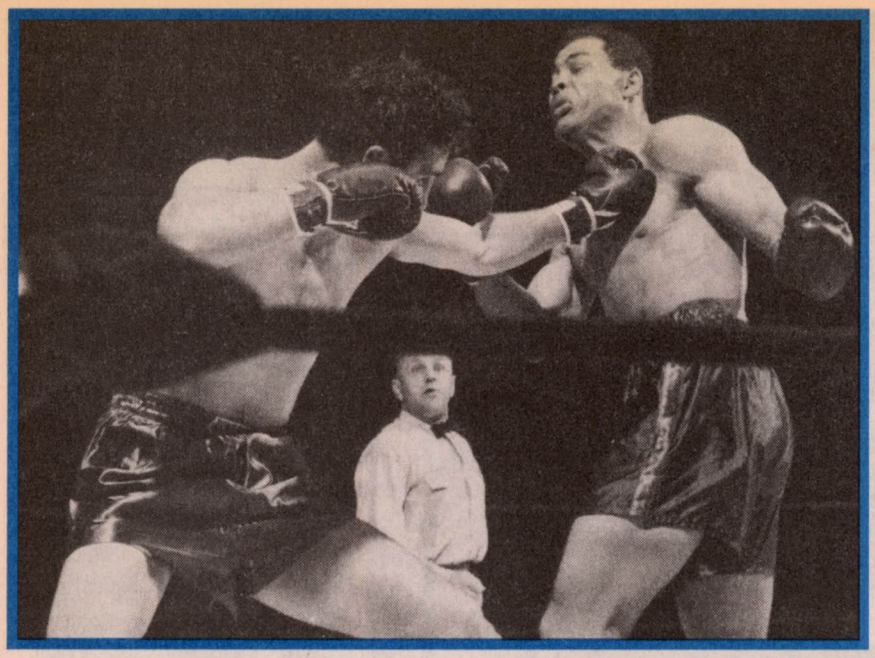
But when they got into the ring a second time, Louis knew exactly what the South American was going to do, bided his time until the eighth, and then let him have it. Godoy hasn't been the same ever since.

Another heavyweight with whom Louis mingled twice was Bob Pastor. In the Garden they engaged in a so-called contest that lasted the limit of 10 heats.

Tutored by the erudite Jimmy Johnston, Pastor started running at the opening bell and never let up.

This system of fighting showed up the champion. He could not hit hard off-balance, and he was off-balance far too much. He could not cage or corner his man.

Then came the return fight in Detroit. Louis gave Pastor one of the most unmerciful beatings ever handed out in a heavy-



Conn was quicker to the trigger throughout much of the contest, catching the ponderous Louis with lightning-quick jabs and combinations. Clearly, the light heavyweight's speed was working for him.

weight championship contest. The end came in the 11th. Pastor was game, he was resourceful, he was backed by the fistic acumen of Johnston.

But Louis' photographic mind had made a picture of the first meeting, and working off that, Joe scored a decisive triumph in the return engagement.

Louis always has been a fistic student. Rarely has he made the same mistake twice. There is nothing haphazard about his maneuvers. He takes every opponent apart, and if he fails to achieve the right diagnosis the first time, he does not fail against that man again.

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The writer is not one of those who feels absolutely certain that had Conn "tin-canned" along through the 15th round, he definitely would have won the title. Not only is it likely the Bomber would have tagged Billy anyway, but as a matter of cold fact, Conn's point advantage going into the 13th was not precisely emphatic. Frankly, it was small.

Nat Fleischer, editor and publisher of THE RING magazine, holds a different opinion. He says that had Billy held on for another seven minutes, the championship would have been his. Here is what Fleischer wrote fight after that fight:

"The performance of Conn was the most remarkable exhibition of gameness and courage seen in any of the bouts in which Joe has been called upon to defend his laurels. It was Joe's 18th successful defense of his championship, and the one fight, more than any of the others, that satisfied even the Bomber's most ardent supporters that Louis had definitely slipped. He has passed his peak. The Conn fight proved that. The Bomber's punching, when he connected, was as powerful as ever, but he missed so frequently, and was hit so often, as to indicate the loss of much of his great fighting qualities.

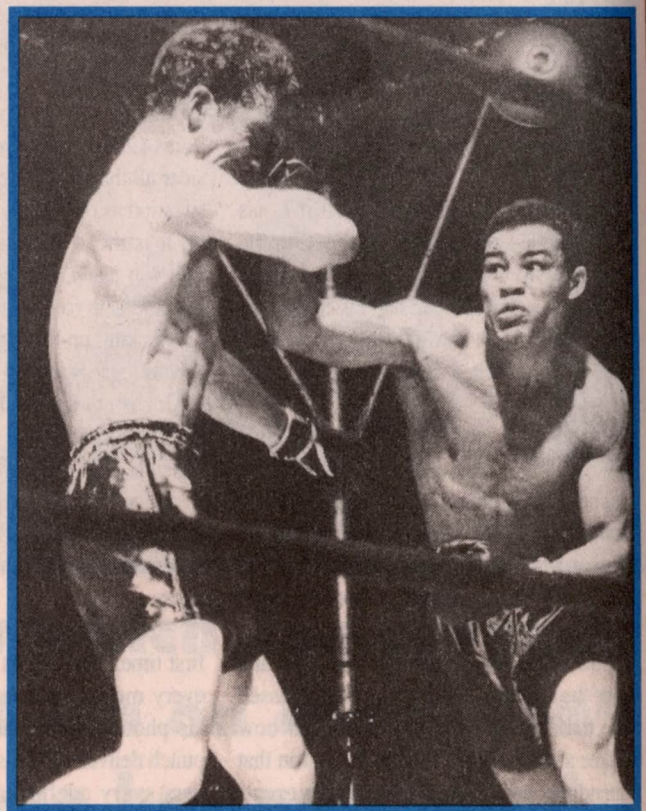
"His big, handsome kid opponent found his master in Louis, but carried on as he promised he would—like a true ring warrior. When stung hardest, he fought back viciously, exchanged punch for punch, and at times had the champion so flabbergasted that Joe scarcely got in a solid wallop while trying to defend himself.

"Joe gained the victory, retained his title, but the honors for the night went to the young boy who was the victim. The huge gathering, the second largest since Louis' quick knockout of Max Schmeling, rose almost as one to cheer the boy who had thrilled them by his firm stand against great odds.

"It was a sudden Louis who finally caught up with the speedy Conn in the 13th. As the Bomber said in his dressing room, 'I figured I was losing. I knew I had to knock Billy out if I was to keep my title, so I jes' went out and did it.'

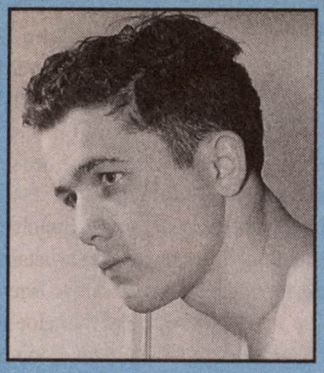
"In those simple words, the champion told the newspapermen how he retained the crown which Conn was trying to wrest from him. And then, queried further, Joe continued: 'I had to gamble. I was hoping Billy would get too cocky and open up, and then I would get him. He did jes' that. I hooked him with a wide left, then I caught him with a right. He became helpless. I knew I had him then, and the rest was easy—just finishing him off.'

"That tells the story of Billy Conn's defeat. Cockiness, extreme gameness, fearlessness in the face of heavy bombardment—true Irish fighting courage—they proved too much for Conn. Had he been more cautious and fought a clever battle instead of mixing it with so heavy a hitter as the Bomber, the



When Louis connected cleanly with his big right, neither Conn nor any other challenger was going to remain erect for long. "The Brown Bomber's" onslaught in round 13 sealed Conn's fate.

THE RING RATINGS, June 1946



Marty Servo

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Joe Louis
1. Billy Conn
2. Joe Walcott
3. Lee Oma
4. Tami Mauriello
5. Bruce Woodcock
6. Jimmy Bivins
7. Elmer Ray
8. Joe Baksi
9. Phil Muscato
10. Tommy Gomez

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Gus Lesnevich
1. Archie Moore
2. Freddy Mills
3. Billy Smith
4. Billy Fox
5. Billy Grant
6. Lloyd Marshall
7. Fitzie Fitzpatrick
8. Ezzard Charles
9. Joe Kahut
10. Walter Woods

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Tony Zale
1. Jake LaMotta
2. Charley Burley
3. Rocky Graziano
4. Bert Lytell
5. Holman Williams
6. Steve Belloise
7. Marcel Cerdan
8. Jimmy Edgar
9. Coley Welch
10. Artie Levine

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Marty Servo
1. Ray Robinson
2. Tippy Larkin
3. Beau Jack
4. Johnny Greco
5. Tommy Bell
6. Jimmy Doyle
7. George Costner
8. Sammy Secreet
9. Danny Kapilow
10. Chuck Taylor

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. Bob Montgomery
2. Willie Joyce
3. Ike Williams
4. Allie Stolz
5. Vic Patrick
6. Enrique Bolanos
7. Johnny Bratton
8. John Thomas
9. Frankie Moore
10. Charley Cabey Lewis

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Willie Pep
1. Sal Bartolo
2. Phil Terranova
3. Jackie Graves
4. Carlos Chavez
5. Miguel Acevedo
6. Spider Armstrong
7. Eddie Miller
8. Ray Famechon
9. Nel Tarleton
10. Al Phillips

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Manuel Ortiz
1. Tony Olivera
2. Cliff Anderson
3. David Kui Kong Young
4. Jackie Jurich
5. Luis Castillo
6. Benny Goldberg
7. Theo Medina
8. Sammy Reynolds
9. Simon Vergera
10. Luis Galvani

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Jackie Paterson
1. Bunty Doran
2. Joe Curran
3. Rinty Monaghan
4. Seaman Terry Allen
5. Stumpy Butwell
6. Dick O'Sullivan
7. Tommy Burney
8. Hugh Cameron
9. Georgie Parks
10. Alex Murphy

Pittsburgher would today be wearing the crown that adorned the heads of other great Irish battlers—John L. Sullivan, Jim Corbett, Gene Tunney, and Jimmy Braddock. That Conn himself realized the error was evident when he remarked in his dressing room, while tears were flowing down his cheeks and he tried desperately to hide them, 'I had too much guts for him. I was too game and learned my lesson too late.'

"Just two rounds more and two seconds and Conn might have reached the goal of his ambition.

"The championship was within his grasp, but his spunky spirit got the better of him.

"Just when things looked rosy for him and it appeared that his dream would come true, Billy succumbed to a terrific one-minute bombardment of every assortment of punches, the kind that leave one paralyzed, as they did eventually leave Billy when he was sent to the canvas and couldn't rise before the fatal 10 had been counted. He was on the verge of getting up when referee Eddie Joseph drolled off the fatal 10. It was the only knockdown of the fight. Previously, Billy had slipped twice to the canvas when his legs crossed in trying to avoid a barrage.

"The stand of the skinny Pittsburgh lad amazed all, including Louis. Up to the time of the knockout, most of the scribes had Conn in the lead. My scorecard showed five rounds for each man and two even, but on the scoring of points, I had Billy well in the lead, as the rounds he had gained were all by very big margins.

"The 12th round in particular found Conn whacking Louis with enough punches to make Joe bleary-eyed. Billy landed with

everything he had in a desperate attempt to clinch the laurels, and he came pretty near turning the trick. And not with the 'powder-puff' punches the Louis supporters said he possessed! They were real wallops!"

***

There were 54,487 fight fans at the Polo Grounds on that June night which saw Louis dispose of Conn. They paid $450,000 into the Jacobs coffers, and he managed to do fairly well for himself. But nothing like the Golconda which is sure to reward Mike in this return fight.

Louis weighed 199½ pounds, while Billy tipped the beam at only 174. It was the fourth lowest weight registered by a contender for the heavyweight title during the glove era.

The battle was devoid of a knockdown until Louis sent over the haymaker in the 13th.

Before the dramatic windup, the closest they came to a knockdown was in the 12th round, and Conn was the aggressor.

Conn decided to throw caution to the winds, to make the supreme gamble. He tore into Joe with rights and lefts and appeared to have the champion verging on distress.

Then Billy ripped a right to the chin, and Louis was staggered. In fact, Joe was close to a knockout. It took him several rounds to recover his stability and several more to know just where he was, and what he was about.

That was Conn's Sunday punch. That was Conn's tremendous chance. When he saw Louis shake off his best, Billy began to lose his confidence.

What was left of the Conn cockiness became dissipated in the 13th, as Joe applied those rib-crushing punches, and soon The Brown Bomber shot home the quietus.

Billy fully realized then that he had met his master. He said that the Bomber's blows to the midsection had weakened him and eased matters for the kayo.

After the battle, Louis did not try to minimize the danger to which his title had been subjected, nor the trickiness of the challenger, who proved far more resourceful than had Tommy Farr in going 15 rounds with the Bomber.

Louis said, "I thought I had Conn going in the fifth round, but he wiggled off the hook. In the 13th round, Billy started a wild left hook. I dropped a short right to the jaw over that hook and it was all over.

"Conn gave me quite a shellacking in the 12th, but honest, he never hurt me. Yes, he had me fussed up. But not hurt.

"Eventually I nailed Conn and he lost his head. You see, he is shiftier than me and faster. I believe he is the trickiest man I have met. Trickier than Farr.

"After the 11th round, Jack Blackburn said to me, 'Chappie, you never nail this guy because he has you licked.'

"A great guy, this Conn. After the ninth round, he said to me, 'Joe, you have a tough fight on tonight.' I said, 'Billy, that's right.'

"Well, I couldn't get going. Felt sluggish. But when I had to get him, I got him."

Conn wasn't always sure of what he was doing, because after the ninth and 12th rounds, Billy started for Joe's corner.

***

As the fight got underway, with Eddie Joseph the referee and Bill Healy and Martin Monroe the judges, Conn danced around, pecking with his left. Louis kept moving in, with his guard high.

Conn hot-footed it until he got his legs crossed up and fell. As he was coming down, Louis shot a right to the head. As Billy arose, he got a right to the heart. It was a typical Louis first round—typical of all his fights except that quick knockout of Max Schmeling.

As the second session got underway, Conn kept right on dancing for a minute, stabbing that left. Louis got sore and charged his man to the ropes with two-fisted volleys. Conn had to retreat, then he had to hold.

The third round picked up tempo. Just near the close, Conn hooked a left to the head and followed with a right to the jaw. Another left hook hurt the champion just as the gong sounded, and the crowd went into a terrific uproar. This was something else again.

Conn followed up his advantage in the fourth. Two right crosses to the jaw hurt Joe, but he just blinked. Billy was moving with greater speed than any of Joe's opponents yet had shown and the Negro could not get set for a hard punch.

In the fifth round, Conn fought as if his fear of the champion had worn off. Billy shifted to clever boxing, craftily maneuvering, sharp, clean punches!

Suddenly, Louis hammered a left hook to the jaw, and Conn was staggered.

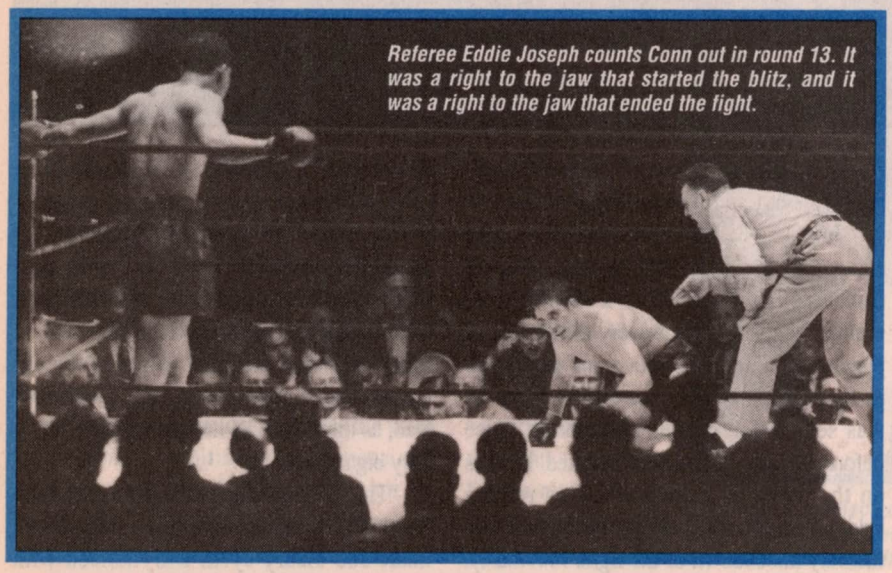
Joe followed with a fusillade of rights and lefts to the head and face. That was when the Louis of the second Schmeling fight would have won by a knockout. But something was lacking. The target was open, and punches were being driven home, but while Conn was wobbly, he did not go down. Near the close of the round, a right hook opened a cut over Conn's right eye.

The sixth saw Louis wallop a right to the heart. It must have hurt plenty.

As Conn went to his corner at the end of that heat, the right side of his face was swollen, his eye was cut, his nose ditto. But his spirit was unquenchable.

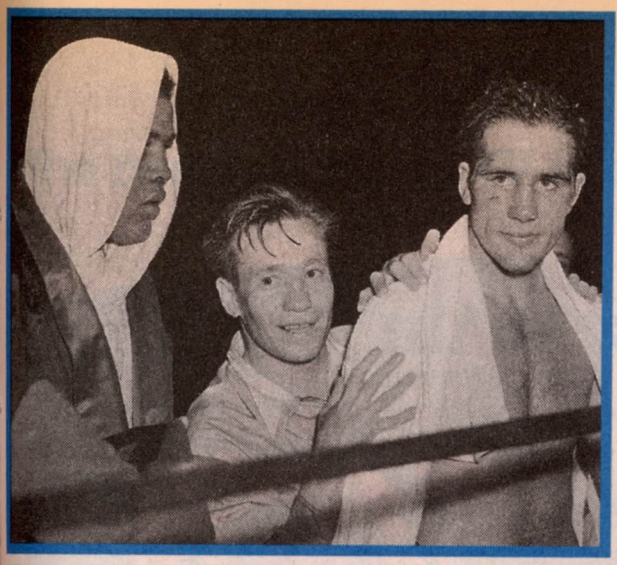
In the seventh, Conn was persuaded to be more cautious. He had been told not to lead so much, because leading means leaving openings, and Louis was not the sort of hitter you invited to throw punches into those leads.

The eighth saw Conn demonstrate his superior cleverness, and his fine punching qualities as well.



Referee Eddie Joseph counts Conn out in round 13. It was a right to the jaw that started the blitz, and it was a right to the jaw that ended the fight.

THE RING, June 1946



Johnny Ray consoles Conn, who would forever be reminded how close he came to winning boxing's biggest prize. "I let my Irish get the better of me," was how he'd explain his failure to cruise to the final bell and settle for a win on points.

Thrice Conn shot his right to the jaw. Then right and left, as the champion failed to send in an answer. Louis looked puzzled. Something he had not bargained for had come up, and his one-track scheme had become upset.

Came the ninth, and Conn walloped that right to the jaw. Another right to the jaw! This was a fight. Louis tore in, but Conn refused to back away and kept up an indomitable attack which had the crowd in an uproar.

They traded drives in the 10th. Conn slipped to the canvas, and on arising was met with lefts and rights. Louis was starting to perk up.

In the 11th, Conn carried the fight right to the champion and took the lead on points. Billy walloped Joe with about every punch you will find in a book of boxing instruction.

Joe now held and then tore into the tantalizing challenger, who refused to be backed into a tight corner. Joe held and then held some more, and at the gong got a left to the chin. This was more than a fight. It was one of the greatest upsets in the history of the heavyweight title.

The 12th saw Conn add to his advantage. But the 13th was stark tragedy for the Pittsburgher.

As the 13th got underway, Louis permitted Billy to keep taking the play away from him.

That was for one precious minute, at the end of which Billy shot a left to Joe's face.

Then the champion went to work. He took back the initiative, and there was nothing the tiring, outweighed Conn could do about it.

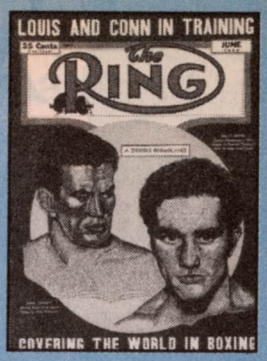
Soon came a right to the jaw. Conn did not go down. But he was whipped.

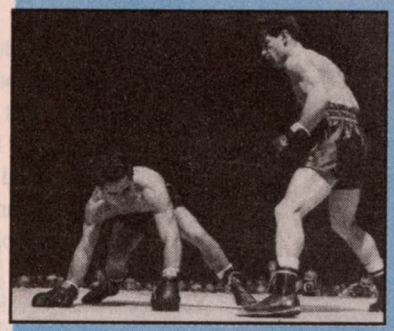
Conn's footwork ceased. His cockiness was gone. His zip had been dissipated.

Louis was like a tiger stalking its prey at close range. Right, left, right, left! Seven punches in a row. Conn's nose was cut, and blood ran from a slit under his right eye.

Then a right to the jaw, and Conn dropped to the canvas. ■

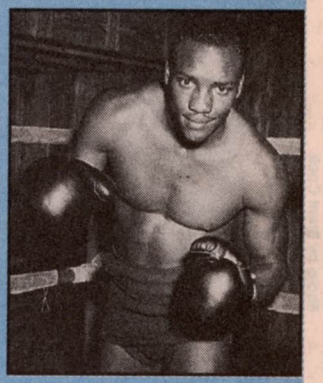
The Cover: The world is waiting for the Joe Louis-Billy Conn rematch. THE RING points out the resemblance between Conn and another Irishman, former heavyweight champion Gene Tunney. Like Conn, Tunney had a daunting task: He had to dethrone Jack Dempsey.





The Sock Of Rocky: All eyes are on middleweight contender Rocky Graziano, who kayoed welter king Marty Servo in two rounds at Madison Square Garden. It was Servo's first bout after winning the world title from Red Cochrane.

Heavyweight Prospects: Joe Louis and Billy Conn aren't the only heavyweights deserving of attention. Among the prospects featured in THE RING: Cuba's Onelio Agramonte (pictured), 15-3, who has wowed ring-watchers with his workouts with Archie Moore, and Jimmy Evans, 15-1, a battler from Brooklyn who has competed at every weight from bantamweight up.



The Proud, The Green: All of Ireland will be watching when Billy Conn tackles heavyweight champion Joe Louis. Irish boxing history is a rich one. Among the Gaels profiled by George Tickell: Paddy Ryan, John L. Sullivan, Jim Corbett, Jim Braddock (pictured), Tommy Loughran, Jack Britton, Terry McGovern, and Joe Lynch.

Fighter Of The Month: Rocky Graziano, who kayoed welter king Marty Servo, is the winner. Among the runners-up: Jersey Joe Walcott (KO 4 Al Blake), Billy Smith (KO 9 Lloyd Marshall), and Carlos Chavez (D 15 Manuel Ortiz).

LOOKING AHEAD

By Steve Farhood

"TERRIBLE TERRY'S" HIT LIST

By splitting from longtime promoter Don King, WBC super welterweight champion Terry Norris sacrificed the opportunity to clash with Felix Trinidad. Fight fans lose. But when he signed with Bob Arum, "Terrible Terry" opened up the possibility of matches vs. Ike Quartey, Pernell Whitaker, and the biggest of all the Big Kahunas, Oscar De La Hoya. Fight fans win.

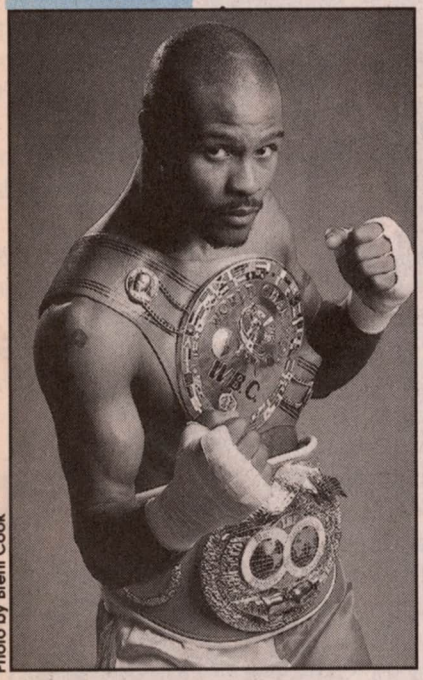


Photo by Brent Cook

Norris looks to the future

"Just make sure you put in the article my challenge to De La Hoya," Norris instructed THE RING two days before knocking out Joaquin Velasquez in two rounds in Kansas City. "I will knock him out."

"The Golden Boy" is at the top of Norris' hit list for one simple reason: "The fight is worth about $5- or $6-million to me," he said. "If I could fight De La Hoya, I'd forget about the other guys [Quartey and Whitaker]. I'd go down to 147 [pounds] to fight him. In fact, I'm challenging him at 147. I can make 147 easy if I want to get down.

"De La Hoya is good, but not as good as people think. They got him on a pedestal, and he doesn't belong there."

As for Quartey and Whitaker, Norris is complimentary—to a point. "Quartey, I can't take anything away from him," he said. "He's a little too straight up and down, maybe a little bit overrated. I don't think he has one-punch power.

"Whitaker has that great movement and a lotta speed, but that's all he has. He's never easy, but of the three, the one I'd have the least problems with would be him."

Before you get too excited about these fights, remember how long we waited for Norris-Trinidad. (We're still waiting.) As we went to press, Norris said a proposed October bout against Quartey probably wasn't going to happen because "Ike's overpricing himself." Even when the fighters are willing and able, roadblocks invariably surface to jeopardize the juiciest of matchups. Or maybe we should spell that roadblock$.

"At this point, the most important thing is money," Norris reminded us.

Think about it: If every boxing fan in the world chipped in a buck, Norris-De La Hoya would be a done deal. On second thought, maybe we shouldn't give Arum any ideas.

LISTEN UP

HBO thought enough of **Shane Mosley** to put him on, but after the newly crowned IBF lightweight champion's disappointing effort against **Phillip Holiday**, what about bringing him back? "Coming off that performance, he should take an ESPN or USA fight, or a network date," said HBO Sports Vice President **Lou DiBella**. "Yes, we'll have him on again, but not immediately. He's gotta show what he can do when he's not ill." (Mosley said he suffered from diarrhea the day of the fight.) Look for full coverage of Mosley-Holiday in next month's issue ... There's talk about **Junior Jones-Wayne McCullough** at Madison Square Garden ... **Johnny Tapia-Danny Romero II** is all but a given. It'll happen next year in Albuquerque. "Everywhere I go [in Albuquerque], all I hear is, 'When's the rematch?'" says **Danny Romero Sr.**, Danny Jr.'s father and trainer.

Las Vegas Hilton

FUTURE FIGHTS

By Art Manteris

VP/Director of Race and Sports Operations Las Vegas Hilton SuperBook

Favorite	Underdog	Odds	The Skinny
Lennox Lewis	Andrew Golota	9-5	Quite a few DQs between them
Shannon Briggs	Lou Savarese	7-5	I'm disappointed with both
Frans Botha	Orlin Norris	7-5	Botha is a rugged customer
Terry Norris	Ike Quartey	8-5	Good fight. Slight edge to bigger man
Johnny Tapia	Danny Romero	9-5	Romero won't start so slow this time

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